

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.







The  
Business  
Retention &  
Expansion Program



# THE BR&E HANDBOOK

A Reference Manual  
for Certified BR&E Coordinators  
and Consultants

1st Edition

Extension Service  
United States Department of Agriculture

Developed by  
Leroy J. Hushak, Dee Yu Pai  
The Ohio State University Extension



# **NOTICE:**

## **Warning of Copyright Restrictions**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the reproduction, distribution, adaptation, public performance, and public display of copyrighted material.

Under certain conditions of the law, nonprofit libraries are authorized to lend, lease, or rent copies of computer programs to patrons on a nonprofit basis and for nonprofit purposes.

Any person who makes an unauthorized copy or adaptation of the computer program, or redistributes the loan copy, or publicly performs or displays the computer program, except as permitted by Title 17 of the United States Code, may be liable for copyright infringement.

This institution reserves the right to refuse to fulfill a loan request if, in its judgement, fulfillment of the request would lead to violation of the copyright law.

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture



NATIONAL  
AGRICULTURAL  
LIBRARY

Advancing Access to  
Global Information for  
Agriculture



## **BR&E DISKETTES**

Disk 1 has:

HANDBOOK.BRE      The BR&E Handbook Document (WP 5.2 code)

Disk 2 has:

RETAIL93.SAS	Retail/Tourism SAS code
RETAIL93.DBF	Retail/Tourism dBASE IV code
RETAIL93.FMO	Retail/Tourism dBASE IV code
RETAIL93.FMT	Retail/Tourism dBASE IV code
RETAIL93.SCR	Retail/Tourism dBASE IV code
RETAIL93.QUE	Retail/Tourism BR&E questionnaire (WP 5.2 code)

MANUF93.SAS	Industrial SAS code
MANUF93.DBF	Industrial dBASE IV code
MANUF93.FMO	Industrial dBASE IV code
MANUF93.FMT	Industrial dBASE IV code
MANUF93.SCR	Industrial dBASE IV code
MANUF93.QUE	Industrial BR&E questionnaire (WP 5.2 code)

CONSUMER.QUE	Retail consumer questionnaire (WP 5.2 code)
CUSTOMER.QUE	Retail customer questionnaire (WP 5.2 code)
VISITOR.QUE	Tourism visitor questionnaire (WP 5.2 code)





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

First Edition, 1995

	<u>Page</u>
List of Figures	v
Preface	vi
Acknowledgments	vii
 <b>I. INTRODUCTION</b>	 <b>I-1</b>
- Program Objectives	I-1
- Main Players	I-2
- Structure of Program	I-2
- The Difference Between Manufacturing and Retail and Tourism BR&E Programs	I-4
- Conceptual Model	I-5
- The Importance of Confidentiality	I-5
- The Business Retention and Expansion Partnership	I-7
- The Role of Cooperative Extension	I-7
- Getting Ready for BR&E	I-7
- Tasks and Procedures for The Retention and Expansion Program	I-9
- For More Information	I-12
 <b>Appendix A: Retail Business Retention and Expansion Programs</b>	
 <b>II. COORDINATORS AND THE TASK FORCE</b>	 <b>II-1</b>
A. BR&E Coordinator and Assistant BR&E Coordinator	II-1
- Responsibilities	II-1
B. Certified Training for BR&E Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator	II-2
- Assignments	II-2
C. Task Force Responsibilities and Meetings	II-4
- Task Force Responsibilities	II-4
- Meetings	II-5
 <b><u>Training Assignments:</u></b>	
Assignment 1: Reading	II-6
Assignment 2: Viewing the Videotape	II-7
Assignment 3: Reading	II-9
Assignment 4: Interviewing a Local BR&E Coordinator	II-11
Assignment 5: Writing a Success Story	II-22
Assignment 6: Conducting Two Practice Visits	II-24
Assignment 7: Meeting with the Task Force	II-26
Assignment 8: Designing a Work Plan	II-27

	<u>Page</u>
III. CERTIFIED TRAINING FOR BR&E CONSULTANTS	III-1
- The Consultant's Responsibilities	III-1
- Certified Training for a BR&E Consultant	III-1
<u>Training Assignments:</u>	
Assignment 9: Reading	III-3
Assignment 10: Listing of Development Contacts	III-7
Assignment 11: Presenting a Workshop	III-9
IV. GETTING MEDIA COVERAGE	IV-1
<u>News Releases:</u>	
Applying for the Program	IV-2
Being Accepted into the Program	IV-3
Training Volunteers	IV-4
Visiting Local Businesses	IV-5
Follow-Up	IV-6
Presenting the Final Report	IV-7
V. HOLDING PRACTICE VISITS AND TASK FORCE MEETINGS	V-1
A. Practice Visits	V-1
Lunch: Time Between Two Practice Visits	V-4
B. Task Force Training Meeting	V-4
Sample Letter/Asking Firms for Participation	V-7
Sample Letterhead	V-8
Sample Letter/Thank You to Participating Firms	V-9
BR&E Industrial Business Visitation Survey	
BR&E Retail/Tourism Business Visitation Survey	



	<u>Page</u>
<b>VI. VOLUNTEER VISITORS</b>	<b>VI-1</b>
A. Recruiting Volunteers	VI-1
- Determining the Number of Volunteers Needed	VI-1
- Types of Volunteer Visitors	VI-1
- Why Should a Volunteer Participate?	VI-2
- Ways to Recruit Volunteers	VI-3
B. Training Volunteers	VI-3
- Prior to Holding the Training Sessions	VI-4
- Scheduling the Training Sessions	VI-5
- Mailing Firm Letters	VI-6
- Holding the Training Sessions	VI-6
Sample Letter/Recruiting Volunteers	VI-8
Form: List of Volunteers Visitors	VI-9
Form: Volunteer Team Assignments	VI-11
C. Visiting Local Establishments	VI-13
- Volunteer Visitors' Responsibility	VI-13
- Completing Each Survey	VI-15
- Setting the Deadline for Completing Visits	VI-15
- Keeping a Record of the Visits	VI-15
Review of Economic Outlook for Local Firms	VI-16
Copy of Industrial Summaries from the <u>U.S. Industrial Outlook</u>	
<b>VII. FOLLOWING-UP ON SURVEY INFORMATION</b>	<b>VII-1</b>
- The Cooperative Nature of Follow-Up Work	VII-1
- Agendas for Task Force Meetings	VII-3
- Examples of Follow-Up Work	VII-4
- Organizing the Follow-Up Work	VII-7
- Writing Letters of Appreciation	VII-7
- Sending Copies of the Surveys to the BR&E staff	VII-7
Sample Letter/Thanking the Establishment for Its Participation	VII-8
BR&E Task Force Follow-Up Worksheet and/or Summary	VII-9

VIII.	STRATEGIC PLANNING WITH THE TASK FORCE	VIII-1
-	Introduction	VIII-1
-	Strategic Planning Meetings	VIII-1
-	Information Sources for Developing Strategies	VIII-3
-	Suggested Strategies for BR&E Programs	VIII-4
-	Selection of High Priority Recommendations:	
	Using a Variation of the Nominal Group Process	VIII-5
-	Executive Summary and Final Report	VIII-6
	<b>Appendix A: Writing Final Report</b>	VIII-7
	<b>Appendix B: Writing Strategy Recommendations</b>	VIII-10
IX.	MARKETING RESEARCH INFORMATION/SURVEY DATA CODING AND TABULATION	IX-1
A.	Marketing Research Information	
-	The U.S. Industrial Outlook	IX-1
-	County Business Patterns	IX-1
-	State Unemployment Compensation Agency Data	IX-2
-	Pull Factors	IX-2
-	Consumer, Customer, and Visitor Surveys	IX-2
-	Additional Data Sources	IX-4
B.	Survey Data Coding and Tabulation	IX-5
-	Data-entry on dBASE IV	IX-6
-	Data-transferring on DBMS/COPY Plus	IX-7
-	Data-tabulation on SAS PC	IX-8
	<b>Samples:</b>	
	Consumer Survey	
	Customer Survey	
	Tourism Survey	
X.	HOLDING THE COMMUNITY MEETING	X-1
-	Suggested Format for the Meeting	X-1
-	Modifications	X-3
-	Whom to Invite	X-3
-	Ways to Improve Attendance	X-3



## LIST OF FIGURES

		<u>Page</u>
Figure I-1	GENERAL STEPS AND TIMEFRAME FOR A BR&E PROGRAM	I-3
Figure I-2	BR&E CONCEPTUAL MODEL	I-6
Figure I-3	BR&E PARTNERSHIP	I-8
Figure VI-1	TYPICAL TRAINING SESSION AGENDA	VI-7
Figure VIII-1	DRAFT REPORT REVIEW MEETING	VIII-2

26  
1950  
1951  
1952  
1953  
1954



## PREFACE

This handbook, is designed for community leaders planning to implement a Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Program. It explains in detail the general steps of a BR&E program for the BR&E Coordinator, BR&E Consultant, and the local Cooperative Extension Service Agent to follow to implement a successful program. For Information about your state's program, contact the state BR&E program leader or the state Cooperative Extension Office.

The BR&E program is a structured, locally-implemented, action-oriented economic development project aimed at stimulating local economic development and growth by assisting existing firms. Studies indicate that existing establishments account for 40 to 70 percent of the net change in employment in a given area. Focusing economic development efforts on existing firms, therefore, is critical to employment stability and growth in a community.

Before a community can assist its firms, however, it must have some mechanism for pinpointing firm's problems, concerns, and opinions. The BR&E program is that mechanism. The mechanics of the program involve local volunteers visiting businesses to gather information about firms' development problems, economic concerns, and opinions about the community as a place to do business. Once aware of these problems and concerns, local leaders can assist their firms.

If a business, for example, wants to expand its facility but lacks the financial backing, perhaps local leaders can introduce the owners to a state development program that offers financial incentives for such expansions. Or, if a business has found it difficult to recruit adequately-trained employees, perhaps local leaders can introduce another state program designed to enhance labor training. Or perhaps they can act as ombudspersons between the regional vocational school and local firms with the intention of helping to match the school's training with the firms' needs. These examples illustrate the essence of the BR&E program: to assist existing firms.

The sections of the handbook have been divided sequentially according to the general steps of the program. Section I discusses briefly the objectives, structure, and conceptual model of the BR&E program. Section II explains the Certified Training correspondence/field work course which the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator of the program must complete prior to implementing their program and Task Force responsibilities. Section III explains the BR&E Consultant(s)'s responsibilities and training. Section IV provides sample news releases for publicity for specific stages of the program. Section V describes the Practice Visits and Task Force meetings which each community holds prior to the volunteer training and after completing the Certified Training. Section VI outlines the recruiting of volunteers who visit local firms and the training session each must attend and describes the actual visits. Section VII explains some of the ways the Coordinators, Consultant, and Task Force can follow-up on the information gathered from the firm visits. Section VIII explains the process that the Task Force uses to write its strategic plan to improve the competitiveness of local firms. Marketing research information and survey data coding and tabulation procedures are presented in Section IX. Finally, Section X recommends a format from which the results and recommended strategic plan of the program should be presented to the community at large.

The handbook has been color-coded for your convenience. The essential information for each section appears on yellow pages. The green pages represent back-up material, references, assignments, or examples that support or illustrate points made earlier in the section.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We want to thank Dr. George W. Morse, founder of the Ohio Business Retention and Expansion Program, for creating the original edition of the Ohio BR&E handbook and revising the second and third editions. Dr. Leroy J. Hushak, Ohio BR&E Program Director 1990-1994, was responsible for the fourth and fifth editions. This national BR&E Handbook was developed from the fifth edition of Ohio's handbook. Comments on the draft edition were received from Mr. Rudy Schnabel, Area Agent, University of Arizona, Mr. Brent McMahan, Director of Economic Development, Bell South Communication, and Dr. George Morse, Professor, University of Minnesota. We specially want to thank Dr. Randy Williams, National Program Leader for Economic Development, USDA-RESA (Rural Economic and Social Development) for the financial support which made this handbook possible.

We further want to thank the many economic development professionals and local leaders who have served as BR&E program coordinators and consultants and who have contributed greatly to the revisions of the BR&E program and this handbook. In addition, we want to thank the hundreds of volunteers who have participated in the BR&E program as Task Force members and as volunteer visitors whose field experiences are the base of the BR&E program and this handbook. The partnership between Cooperative Extension Service, the state Department of Development and the leaders of each BR&E program from the local community continue to be the "cornerstones" of outstanding BR&E programs.











# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **Program Objectives**

The primary goal of the Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Program is to stimulate local economic growth by retaining and expanding existing establishments. Research indicates that existing establishments account for 40 to 70 percent of the net change in total employment. To assist these vital establishments, therefore, this action-oriented program attempts to increase the competitiveness of existing firms by pinpointing their economic development problems, helping them solve these problems, and designing strategic economic plans geared toward meeting their development needs. Specifically, there are six objectives of the program:

### **Short-term Objectives**

1. demonstrate the community's pro-business attitude
2. develop a detailed data base about local establishments
3. solve immediate/short-term problems

### **Long-term Objectives**

1. increase the competitiveness of local establishments
2. develop a strategic plan for economic development
3. continue local BR&E efforts

In the short term, the program demonstrates the community's pro-business attitude because its overall goal is to assist existing businesses. The program enables the community to gather primary data on its local economy. The program also helps to identify and address current local problems, concerns, or issues mentioned by firms during the visits. Often the solutions to these problems, such as securing financing for a planned expansion, improve the firm's competitiveness. Competitive firms are more likely to expand than other firms.

In the long term, the program can improve the competitiveness of local establishments by addressing their broader needs and concerns. By assisting firms to solve these problems the likelihood of those firms remaining in the community and perhaps expanding increases. The program also provides an excellent opportunity for strategic planning. Having local leaders working cooperatively, having identified the strengths and weaknesses of the community, and having gathered current data about local establishments, the stage is set for the community to write a unified, strategic plan for its future economic development. The last objective of the program in the long term is to encourage communities to continue their BR&E efforts. Continuing visitation programs, holding economic development forums, hiring full-time economic development professionals, establishing committees to meet the specific needs of local businesses, or publishing a newsletter to maintain communication among businesses and local government are all viable extensions of the BR&E program.

## **Main Players**

The Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator, Consultant, Task Force (eight to 10 people), and Volunteer Visitors are the main local players in the BR&E program. The Coordinators are well-respected leaders in the community. Their role is to organize and lead the local program. The Consultant is an economic development professional who is quite familiar with state and federal development programs. The role of the Consultant is to assist the Coordinators and, most important, to propose solutions to nonlocal problems mentioned during the business visits. Both the Coordinators and Consultant complete a correspondence course (explained in the next two sections) to help prepare them for the program.

The members of the Task Force are local leaders from the community. Members usually include a mayor, county commissioner, extension agent, community improvement corporation representative, city council member, visitor's bureau director, banker, realtor, utility representative, vocational or public school superintendent, and other influential citizens interested in economic development. The role of the Task Force is to propose solutions to local problems identified during the business visits and to write recommendations for economic development based on the program's findings.

The Volunteer Visitors are also local leaders from the community. Often they represent various public offices, regional planning agencies, schools, economic development agencies, and local businesses. The volunteers receive two and one-half hours of instruction prior to visiting businesses. Their main role is to visit local businesses and to gather data from them through the survey.

## **Structure of the Program**

The program is implemented on a local scale. During the first stage, local leaders participate in training sessions to prepare them for the program. During the second stage, these leaders visit local firms with a survey to collect information. After the visits the local Coordinators, Consultant, and Task Force address the concerns, issues, or requests made by the establishments. Meanwhile, the state BR&E staff analyzes the information from the surveys and writes a report of the findings. The last stage involves the presentation of the program's findings, accomplishments, and recommendations for future economic development to the public at a community meeting/banquet. The program can be completed in about nine months as shown in Figure I-1.

The Business Retention and Expansion Program offers three versions: industrial, retail, and tourism programs. Manufacturing firms are surveyed for the industrial program while retail and service related businesses are the focus of retail programs. Communities with significant recreation or convention economies can conduct the tourism program. Communities can conduct individual programs or any combination of the three programs offered. Additional information important to business retention and expansion can be gathered using the available customer and consumer surveys (See Section IX). Suggested sample sizes range from five hundred to two thousand. The differences between industrial and retail and tourism programs are discussed below.



**Figure I-1**

**General Steps and Time Frame for A BR&E Program \***

<b>STEP</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	
	<u>Autumn</u>	<u>Spring</u>
<b>1. Submit Application</b>		
a. Pre-application	Aug. 15	Jan. 1
b. Meeting to brief Task Force Leaders		
c. Final Application	Aug. 30	Jan. 15
<b>2. Coordinators and Consultant complete certified training</b>	Aug. 30	Jan. 15
<b>3. Prepare for Training Volunteers</b>	Sept. 15	Jan. 30
a. Identify all volunteers		
b. Contact volunteers		
c. Identify all firms		
d. Labels for firms, SIC, phone numbers		
e. Publicity on program		
<b>4. Conduct Practice Visits and Hold Task Force Meeting</b>	Sept. 30	Feb. 15
<b>5. Train Volunteer Visitors</b>	Oct. 15	March 1
<b>6. Conduct Official Visits</b>	Oct. 16 to Nov. 15	March 2 to April 1
a. Goal: 2 weeks		
b. Reassign: 4 weeks		
c. Cut off: 6 weeks		
<b>7. Immediate Follow-up:</b> Coordinators, Consultant and Task Force address problems, concerns, and requests mentioned by firms in the survey	Starts when surveys come in	
<b>8. BR&amp;E staff Writes Draft Report and Conducts Data Review Meeting</b>	Jan. 15	June 1
<b>9. Task Force Writes Strategic Plan</b>	March 1	July 15
<b>10. Community Meeting:</b> Coordinators, Consultant Task Force and Sponsor Present Final Report to the Community	April 15	Sept. 1
<b>11. Implement Recommendations</b>	Completed as needed	

\* These are two typical program schedules representing programs beginning in the Autumn and Spring.

## The Differences Between Manufacturing and Retail and Tourism BR&E Programs

Due to the characteristics of retail and tourism businesses, the programs differ from the industrial programs in several ways. Ohio experience with retail and tourism programs is discussed in "Retail Business Retention and Expansion Programs" attached to Appendix A in this section.

1. Market structure is different

- a) Most retail and tourism businesses serve a very local market
- b) Customer location is highly important to retail and tourism businesses
- c) Day of week and time of day are important considerations for retail and tourism businesses

2. Retail and tourism businesses are predominantly small, usually less than 10 employees

For industrial programs, businesses with less than 10 employees are often excluded from business visits because they contribute little to the industrial base. For retail and tourism program, however, less than 10 employees often predominate. It is these businesses who are trying to survive with in competition with Walmart, Kmart, etc.

3. Retail and tourism businesses tend to think small

Most retail and tourism businesses have difficulty thinking beyond their immediate shopping area or business district. It is often easy for them to be blind sided by a new shopping mall or Walmart that competes. Therefore, in the case of Ohio programs, it is encouraged that retail and tourism programs be conducted at the county level for two reasons:

- a) To involve county leaders in countywide retail or tourism planning
- b) To force local business managers, local leaders and county leaders to think at least in countywide terms while addressing business district or shopping area issues.

4. Advertising is more critical to retail and tourism businesses

5. Visual and structural features of the retail and tourism business and of the business district or shopping area are critical to the vitality of retail and tourism businesses



## Conceptual Model

In the diagram depicting the conceptual model of a BR&E program (Figure I-2), it is clear that there are several steps between firm visits and the program's ultimate goals. Certain conditions and results are necessary before the program can help expand, retain, or attract establishments, or help soften the impact of plant closings. Nonetheless, the connection between visits and economic development exists.

If during a visit, for example, an establishment explains that it is considering relocating because local production costs are too high, local leaders can identify specific state and federal economic development programs designed to make establishments more competitive. Such programs can help the establishment adopt new technology, receive subsidies, enter new markets, and develop new skills -- all of which could increase profits and make the community, once again, a competitive location for that establishment.

The key to meeting the ultimate goals of the program as shown in the conceptual model is the follow-up work after the visits. The visits alone will not retain or create jobs, they will not attract firms, and they will not forewarn of plant closings. Only by following-up on the information gathered from the visits may a community achieve these results.

## The Importance of Confidentiality

The information gathered from the visits is strictly confidential. The emphasis on confidentiality in this program is important to the businesses and helps ensure their participation. The volunteer visitors must understand this so that they do not share information from their visits. The Coordinators and Consultant, of course, will learn of this information as they review the surveys. As is discussed later in the handbook, the Coordinators and Consultant will review every completed survey to identify short-term, immediate follow-up issues. If an establishment, for example, has requested information about export marketing or a state low interest loan program, the Coordinator/Consultant needs to send such information to the establishment. In this instance, they must know the identity of the establishment to give assistance.

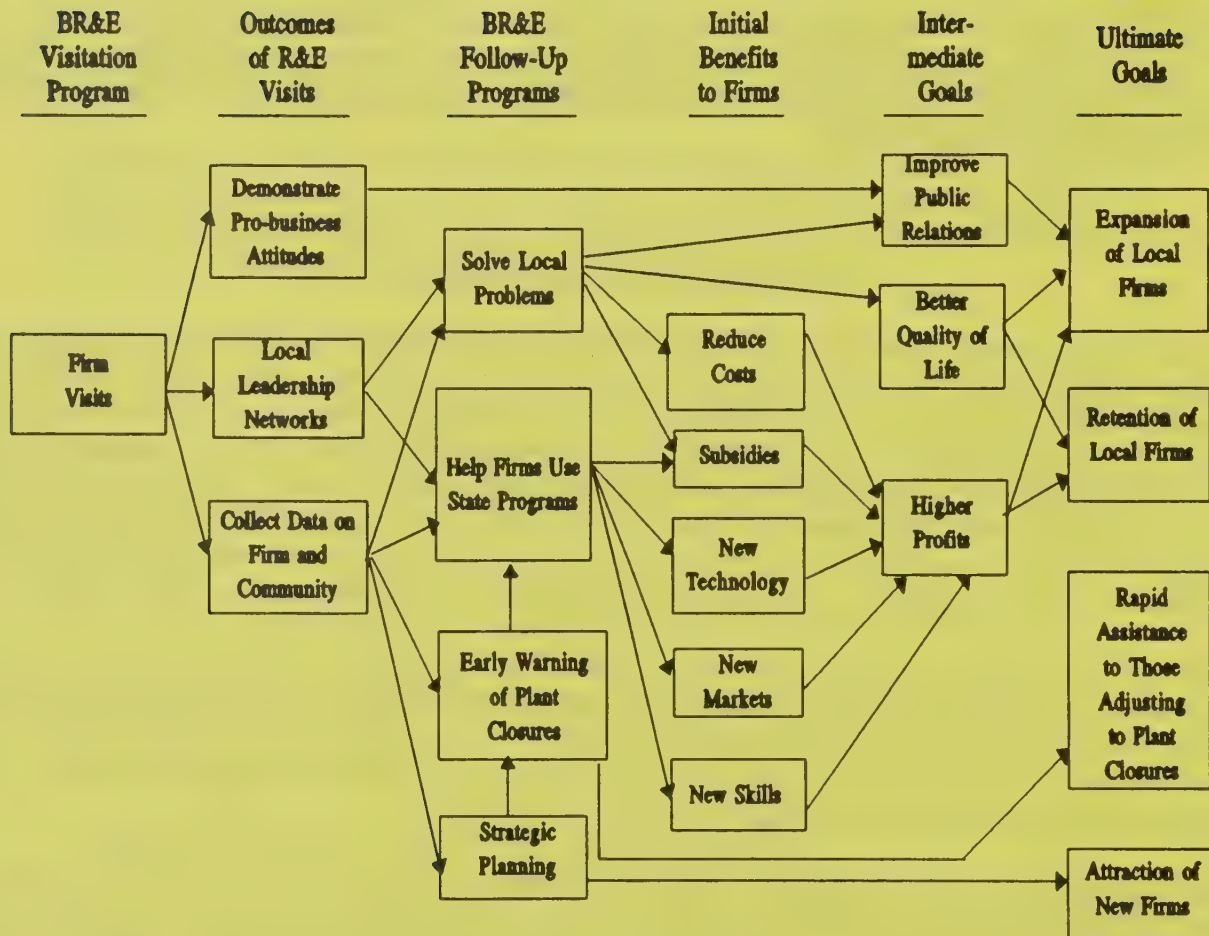
Confidentiality of the survey information applies to the Task Force as well. As the Task Force reviews the surveys, the identity of the establishments is not disclosed. The names of the businesses have no bearing on the type of follow-up action selected unless it is an action to resolve a problem of an individual establishment. In fact, if the follow-up work does not require disclosing the identity of the firms making the complaint, the identities should not be disclosed.

In such an example, it is unlikely that the names of the businesses need to be disclosed. The key finding is that a large portion of the establishments made the same complaint. If several establishments complained about road conditions, however, the names may have to be shared with appropriate departments in order to have repairs made.

The Coordinators, Consultant, Volunteer Visitors, Task Force members, and the participating businesses must understand that the visits are confidential, but that should follow-up work be necessary, disclosure of the establishment's name may be necessary.

Figure I-2

### Conceptual Model of the BR&E Business Visitation Program





## **The Business Retention and Expansion Partnership**

The Business Retention and Expansion Program is a partnership between the state BR&E team and the local community. Through cooperative efforts, these two groups accomplish the goals of the BR&E program. The flow chart of the Business Retention & Expansion Partnership is in Figure I-3.

### **The Role of Cooperative Extension**

The state BR&E staff trains the Coordinators, Consultant, and Volunteer Visitors and briefs the Task Force members. Second, it conducts applied research on employment trends and analyzes the survey data. Third, it assists the Task Force in writing the strategic plan. County extension agents have been quite active in previous programs, serving as Task Force coordinators, members, and volunteer visitors.

### **Getting Ready for BR&E**

In this section, the factors necessary to get ready for a successful R&E program are discussed. The R&E program is a labor intensive program, requiring many hours of input on the part of community leaders, the support and input of a rather large number of influential community people on the Task Force or coordinating committee and as volunteer business visitors, and the commitment and resolve to keep the BR&E spirit and effort alive through the implementation of a strategic plan and continued business contacts either through formal BR&E programs or through less formal ongoing business contacts. For success in R&E, therefore, it is essential that broad-based support for and commitment to the program be developed before the program begins.

#### **1. Local community leaders develop support for the program**

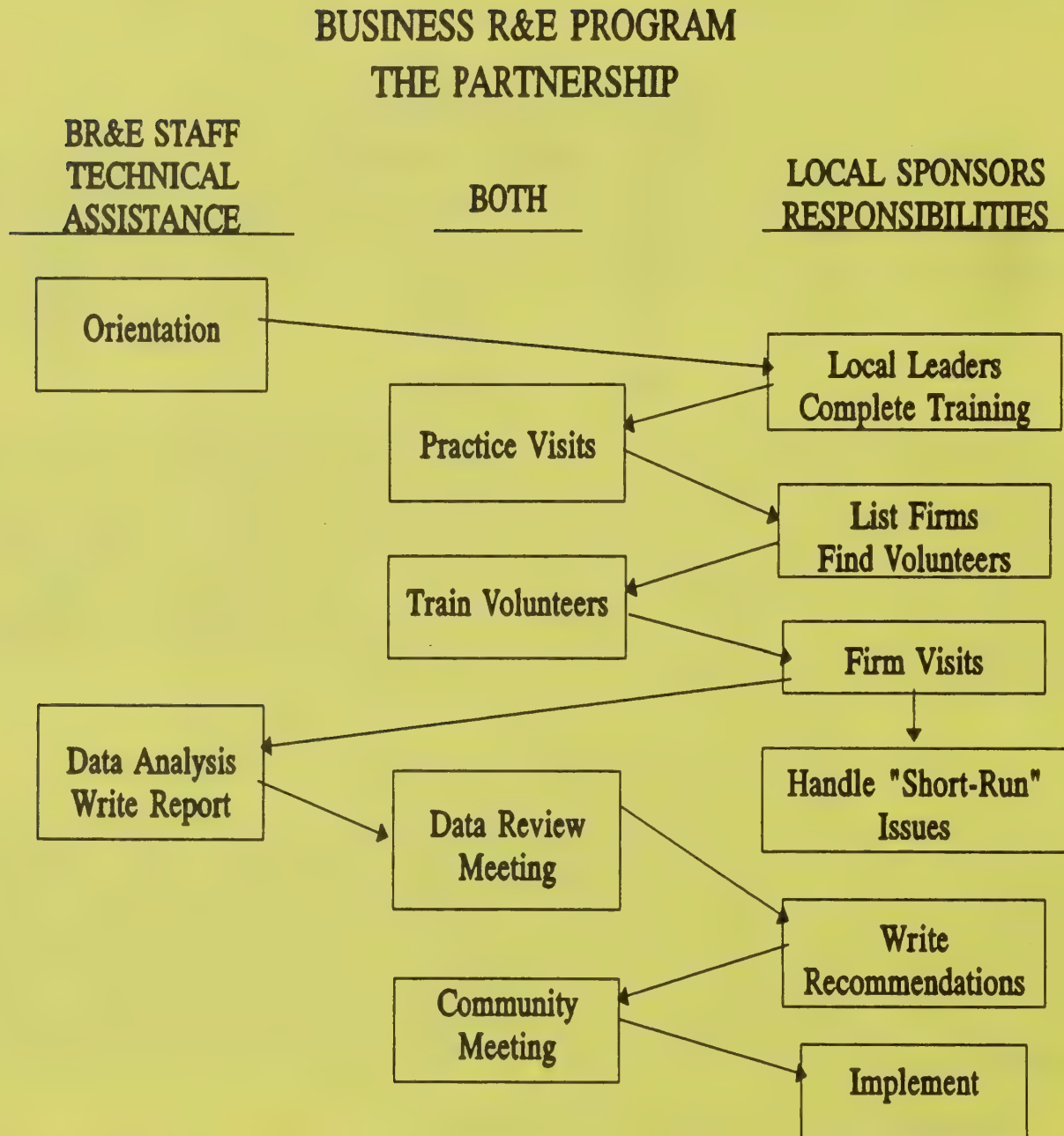
The community leaders which take the lead in developing support for BR&E vary depending on the structure of the community. Usually, BR&E is conducted on the county level. County-wide organizations are in the best position to undertake the task of building support because they have county-wide focus. The chamber of commerce director, community improvement corporation director, economic development director, county planning commission director, county Extension agent, or Sea Grant Extension or MAS agent are prime candidates for developing support for the BR&E program. At sub-county, usually city, levels, the local chamber of commerce executive, planning commission director, development department director, or local Extension agent are in the best position to develop support.

#### **2. The program has effective and competent leadership**

The BR&E program is led by a Task Force or coordinating committee with the key positions of Coordinator (Chair) and Assistant or Co-Coordinator, and Consultant. Primary leadership for the BR&E program comes through the Coordinator(s). It is often the coordinators who develop initial support for the program. It is the coordinators who are responsible for seeing that the BR&E tasks at each step of the process are carried out. Therefore, it is critical that the coordinators have the time and be sufficiently aggressive so that BR&E procedures are carried out in a timely manner. The role of the Consultant is



Figure I-3



to be familiar with state programs which can be used to assist local businesses, and to help businesses use these programs.

3. Task Force and volunteer visitors have broad community representation

The Task Force has four responsibilities: to assist in developing the local issues about which the program wants to solicit information from businesses, to help find volunteers to visit businesses, to assist in solving local business problems identified during the business visits, and to write the strategic plan. The volunteer visitors of course carry out the business visits. It is particularly important that the Task Force members be respected community members who can legitimize the BR&E program, particularly the strategic plan. It is also critical to select Task Force members who support the BR&E program and will be active members of the process. The volunteers must also be respected community members so that business owners or managers will be willing to be interviewed.

4. Local development organizations provide sponsors and financial support

As operated in Ohio, the local community must provide the operating resources for travel, data analysis, and report production (currently \$1,800 per program is charged in Ohio). The larger cost, however, is for the human resources to carry out the program. For these reasons, it is important that local development organizations not only provide the financial support, but provide sponsorship in the form of time commitments of the personnel needed to conduct the program.

5. The primary sponsoring organization has an organized, well-managed staff

The state BR&E staff takes most of the burden of materials preparation, data compilation and analysis, and report writing off the local community. However, there are still significant local needs for the services of local staff. There are labels to be typed, questionnaires to be duplicated and mailed to businesses to be visited, questionnaires to collect and copy, and meetings of the Task Force to be called and organized. A paid staff person is almost essential to assist the coordinators with these tasks.

### Tasks and Procedures for the Retention and Expansion Program

The purpose of this section is to highlight the tasks and procedures in the BR&E process. The detailed information on carrying out each step is provided in the rest of this handbook.

The Business Retention and Expansion Program consists of a business visitation process and an optional visitors/customer survey for a retail/tourism program (See Section IX). The visitation process includes seven main steps:

- (1) Program coordinators and consultant receive training from BR&E staff to make them familiar with the BR&E program and formulate a Task Force.

The Task Force consists of eight to 12 persons who can make things happen in the local community. Representatives from the Visitors Bureau, Chamber, CIC, Planning Commission, SBDC, Financial Institutions, Educational Institutions, etc., are usually appropriate. The Task Force Coordinators must be persons willing to take the lead in conducting the BR&E program.

Before the task force is finally formulated, the BR&E coordinators should meet with the state BR&E staff to understand the procedures of the program. The final step in the training occurs when a state BR&E staff member assists the local coordinators and consultant in conducting two practice visits and then meets with the entire Task Force to brief them on the BR&E program.

This preparation stage also includes several administrative steps to assemble information necessary for the program:

a) assemble the list of firms to be visited

The coordinators together with the task force need to complete the list of firms to be visited. The number of firms to be visited is flexible. However, it is recommended that communities visit between 50 and 70 firms. The selection of the firms to be visited can be randomly chosen from different business types, for example, in a tourism program from hotels, motels, restaurants, marinas, and sport shops. It is also recommended that communities select the firms from different geographic locations.

b) recruit volunteer visitors

The coordinators and the task force need to solicit volunteers to visit firms. Volunteers visit firms in teams of two. It is recommended that each volunteer team visits no more than four firms. Therefore, the suggested number of volunteers equals one-half the number of firms you plan to visit. For example, you need 26 to 36 volunteers, in 13 to 18 teams, to visit 50 to 70 firms.

c) practice visits and task force meeting

Two firms are selected to be interviewed for the practice visits. The survey is sent to each firm before the scheduled visits. Then, the state BR&E staff member, along with the Task Force leaders, conduct the interviews. Communities should schedule one visit in the morning and the other in the afternoon. After the practice visits, the Task Force meets to discuss procedures and the effectiveness of the practice visits.

(2) State BR&E staff and coordinators train volunteer visitors to conduct firm visitations.

After volunteer visitors have been recruited, two volunteer training sessions are held to prepare the volunteers for their visits. Before holding the training sessions, the coordinators need to send the state BR&E staff the following information:

- a) the list of visitors paired into teams of two and each volunteer team's firm assignment;
- b) two sets of adhesive labels with the names, addresses, and phone numbers of each volunteer visitor; and
- c) one set of adhesive labels with the names, contact person, addresses, phone numbers, and SIC codes (if available) of each firm to be visited;

Using this information, the BR&E staff prepares the visitation packets for each volunteer visitor. Communities send an invitation card which includes a two training session time schedule and the location to each volunteer visitor. The volunteer visitors need to attend one training session.



The experience from the past programs shows that if volunteer visitors attend the training session, then they will more often complete the visits. One training session should be held during the late afternoon and the other training session should be held during the early evening hours. This method of scheduling the training sessions has proven to be effective for BR&E programs in Ohio. Communities also need to mail a cover letter with a copy of the survey instrument to each firm to be visited three to four days before visitor training. This allows the visitors to begin calling businesses immediately after the volunteer training to begin scheduling interviews.

- (3) Task Force reviews the surveys during visitation process.

As the visits occur, the coordinator needs to keep track of visits completed and remind teams to set up interviews if they are lagging. The Task Force is to meet periodically to review batches of 10 to 15 surveys per meeting to see what problems have been identified which can be addressed. As groups of surveys are completed, they are to be copied and sent to the state BR&E staff so the BR&E staff can begin processing data.

- (4) Prepare data analysis and reports.

The state BR&E staff compiles and analyzes the data obtained from the visitations and generates a draft report of the BR&E program which identifies major issues from the survey and includes a suggested set of strategic recommendations as a starting point for strategic plan development.

- (5) Data Review Meeting.

The state BR&E staff sends a copy of the draft report and recommendations to the coordinators. The coordinators copy and distribute the report and recommendations to the Task Force. Once the Task Force reviews the document, a BR&E staff member goes to the community to discuss the results with the Task Force. The staff member then takes the Task Force through a nominal group process to focus on those actions/recommendations which are most important/desirable to the Task Force and the community. Any actions of priority to Task Force members are entertained during the nominal group process.

- (6) The Task Force writes its final strategic plan.

In the Ohio BR&E program, the Task Force writes the strategic plan. The plan is to contain no strategic recommendations which the Task Force does not want to adopt. Finalization of the plan requires additional Task Force meetings. Once the final plan is written, it is sent to the state staff where two reports are produced: 1) a complete report of all results of the surveys and the strategic plan for limited distribution, and 2) an executive summary report (eight to 12 pages) of the major results and the strategic plan. For programs in Ohio, 250 copies of the executive summary report are produced for distribution.

- (7) Community Meeting.

The final step is a meeting where the final results of the program and the Task Force's proposed actions are announced. This can be a breakfast, lunch, dinner or reception; it is usually best to incorporate it into an ongoing function (chamber of commerce quarterly meetings, lions monthly meetings, etc.) where community leaders normally gather to maximize participation.

The successful BR&E program requires that each of the preparatory steps and process steps be carried out in a timely manner so that momentum is maintained and actions completed. However, the real success step is in the support for and commitment to the strategic plan so that its strategies are implemented in a timely fashion. All is for naught if the work is done, the plan is formed, and then nothing happens.

**For More Information**

Please contact your state BR&E leader.

## **Appendix A: Retail Business Retention and Expansion Programs**

### **I. Introduction**

The Ohio Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Program was initiated jointly by The Ohio State University and the Ohio Department of Development in July, 1986. To mid 1994, 88 Ohio BR&E Programs have been completed. Prior to 1991, the programs primarily focused on the manufacturing sectors. However, the loss of much of the heavy industry in some regions in Ohio has caused significant realignment of the economy. Retail and tourism businesses have been one of the offsetting forces. Therefore, in 1991 we began to design the Ohio BR&E Program to include retail and tourism businesses in addition to the industrial program. Since then, 30 Ohio communities completed the visitation stage of their BR&E programs, focusing either on the industrial, retail or tourism sector or on a combination of the three sectors. The 22 retail and tourism community programs interviewed 915 firms in total and the 21 industrial programs interviewed 771 firms. All retail results reported below include tourism forms. In the following sections, we first present the aggregate results from these 22 retail programs and compare these results to the results of the 21 industrial programs; and then discuss the differences between retail and industrial programs.

### **II. Comparison of Retail vs Industrial BR&E Program Survey Results**

The 915 retail firms employed 19,320 workers in total, compared to 83,004 workers employed by the 771 industrial firms. The aggregated results of these 30 communities survey results are discussed under four areas: (1) information and education needs, (2) labor force issues, (3) quality of life, and (4) sustaining economic development. While the results and strategic actions may be somewhat unique to Ohio communities, they do illustrate the kinds of responses and suggested actions that are likely to result from BR&E program in your community.

#### **1. Information and Education Needs**

##### **Business Factors**

Retail firms were asked if the following business factors had changed over the last three years: number of customers, sales quantity volume, sales dollar volume, and profit. Among 915 retail firms surveyed, 60 percent of the firms increased the number of customers; 58 percent of the firms increased the sales quantity volume; 59 percent of the firms increased the sales dollar volume; and 45 percent of the firms increased their profits. However, 25 percent of the firms responded that their profits declined over the last three years (Figure 1).

##### **Business Hours/Days/Seasons and Customer Location**

Retail Firms were asked to rank their business hours, days and seasons from the highest peaks to lowest sales times. Aggregate rankings of 915 firms's responses for business days revealed that the peak business days are Friday and Saturday with weights of 4,156 and 4,003, respectively. They were followed by Mondays, Thursdays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. Sundays was ranked as the slowest sales day with a weight of 1,993.

Rankings of business hours revealed that the peak business hours are the afternoon hours with a weight of 3,057. Morning ranked second with a weight of 2,958; lunch hours ranked third with weight of 2,705; and night hours last with a weight of 859.

The 915 retail firms ranked Spring highest as a business season; giving it a weight of 2,222. Summer and Fall were ranked very closely with weights of 2,175 and 2,149, respectively. Winter ranked last with a weight of 1,514.



**Figure 1**

Retail firms were also asked where most of their customers lived. The findings revealed that most of the customers live in the city/town and outside the city but in the county with weights of 2,568 and 2,510, respectively. People living in a neighboring county ranked third with a weight of 1,784; and people living outside this and a neighboring county ranked fourth with a weight of 1,160.

### Business Loans

368 of the 915 retail firms surveyed indicated they have sought or applied for business loans. 315 of these 368 firms sought loans from commercial banks; 23 firms sought loans from savings and loans; 21 firms sought loans from other institutions or programs. Reasons most frequently cited for requesting loans included financing operating capital (126 firms) followed by financing inventory (95 firms).

### Advertising Issues

Retail Firms were asked to rank five types of advertising outlets and media they used most. The yellow pages were ranked at the top, followed by daily newspaper and weekly newspaper (only 1993 programs' responses were included in this analysis).

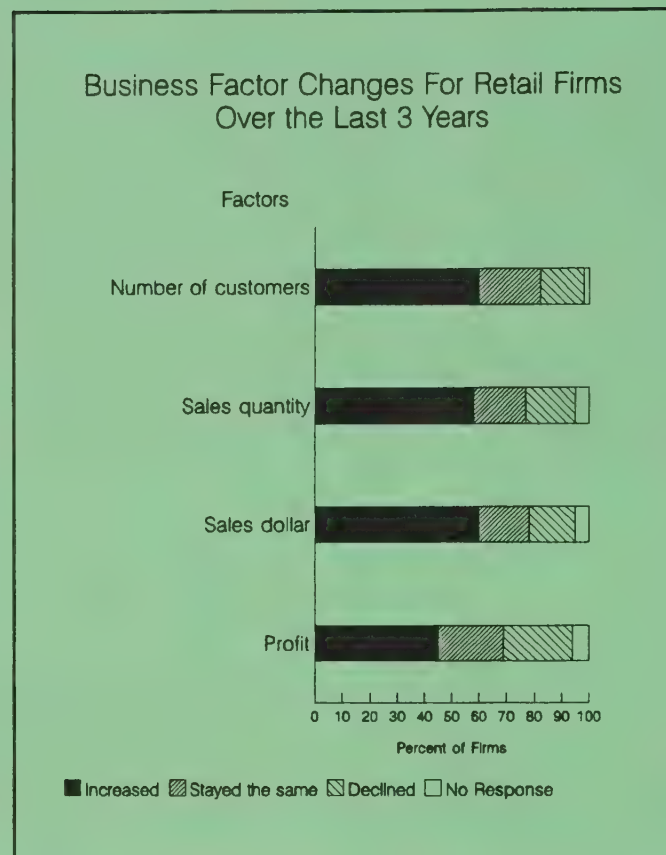
The survey also addressed shared advertising expenses among the businesses. Among 915 firms surveyed, 345 firms indicated they shared advertising expenses. Among the 531 firms not sharing advertising expenses, 297 firms indicated that they would consider sharing advertising expenses.

### Shopping Atmosphere/Hospitality

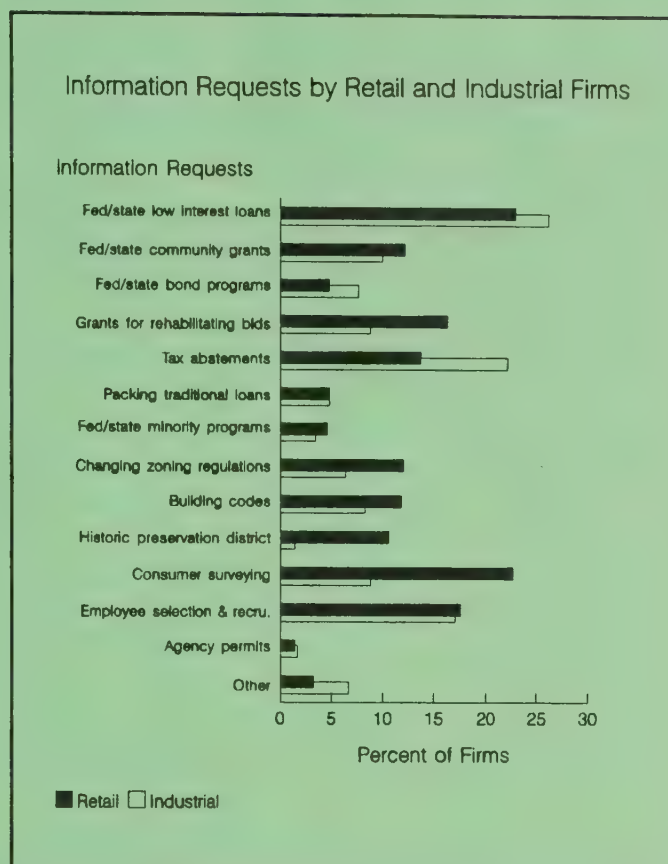
The retail firms surveyed presented a very positive picture of their areas' shopping atmosphere and hospitality. Shopping atmosphere or hospitality was rated as excellent or good by 49 percent of the firms.

### Information/Assistance Requests

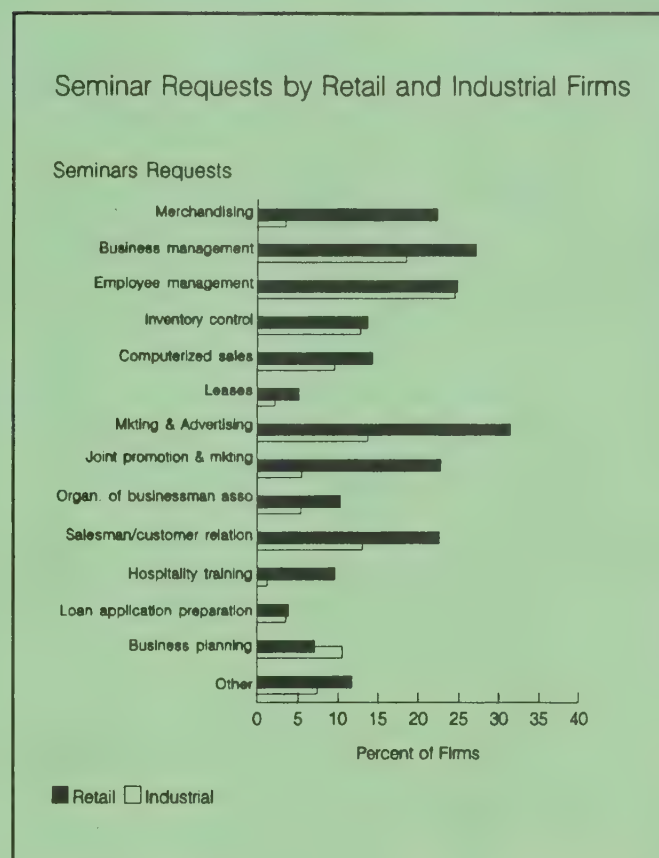
The types of information and seminars/workshops in which retail and industrial firms expressed the greatest interest are listed in Figures 2 and 3 along with the percentage of firms expressing interest. The 915 retail firms most frequently requested information on the following: (1) federal and state low interest loans, (2) consumer surveying and market analysis, (3) employee selection and recruitment, and (4) grants for rehabilitating buildings. The 771



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**



industrial firms most frequently requested information on the following: (1) federal and state low interest loans, (2) tax abatements, (3) employee selection and recruitment, and (4) international export assistance (Figure 2).

Seminar topics of greatest interest to the retail firms include: (1) marketing and advertising for individual business, (2) general business management, (3) employee management, (4) joint promotion and marketing, (5) salesmanship/customer relationships, and (6) merchandising. The industrial firms showed the greatest interest in seminars regarding: (1) employee management, (2) general business management, (3) international export assistance, (4) marketing for individual business, and (5) salesmanship/customer relationships (Figure 3).

### Needed Improvements Issues

The retail firms were asked to rank the five most needed improvements to retain and expand retail businesses; the five highest ranking improvements were (also see Figure 4):

- (1) Improvement of exterior atmosphere of the area;
- (2) Additional businesses;
- (3) Special events or promotions;
- (4) Reduction of traffic congestion; and
- (5) More variety of places to eat.

## 2. Labor Force Issues

### Work Force Ratings

The 915 retail firms rated their work forces very favorably for both attitude and productivity. Eighty-eight percent of the firms rated their employees' attitude as either good or excellent. Eighty-six percent of the firms rated their work forces' quality to be either good or excellent. These were about the same ratings that the 771 industrial firms gave their work forces.

### Employment Concentrations and Wage Rates

About 54 percent of the retail firms surveyed were small businesses employing fewer than 10 employees, while only 18 percent of the industrial firms employed fewer than 10 workers. Only four percent of the retail firms were large firms employing 100 or more workers, but 21 percent of the industrial firms employed 100 or more workers. While these distributions are probably biased toward larger firms because of a tendency to select larger firms by Task Force Coordinators, they are supported generally by data in County Business Patterns.

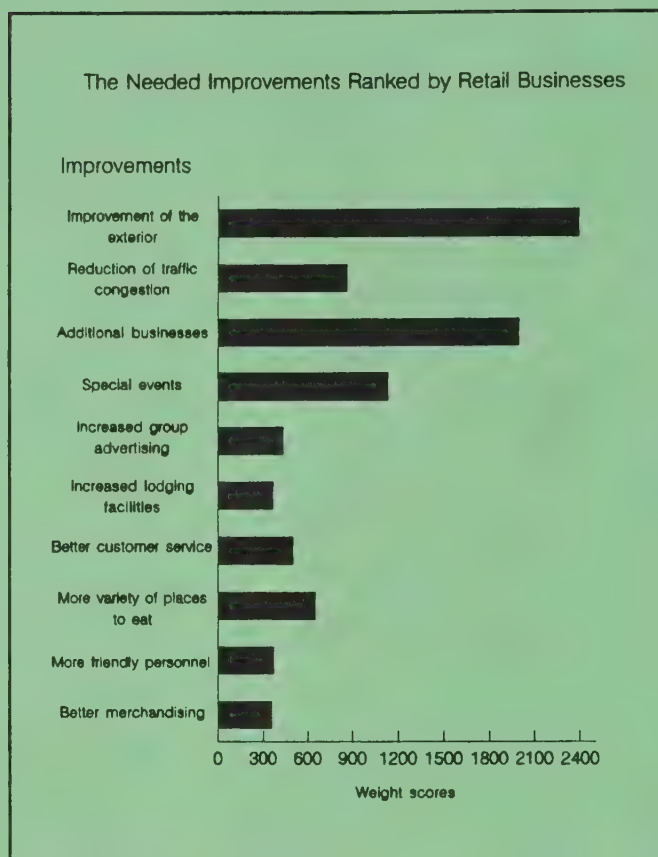
The retail and industrial firms were similar in that the majority of their work forces were employed by firms with 100 or more workers: 53 percent of the retail workers were employed by firms with 100 or more workers and 81 percent of the industrial workers were employed by large firms with 100 or more workers.

The average wage rates for the retail firms full-time employees and part-time employees were \$8.10 and \$5.60 per hour, respectively. For the 771 industrial firms, those rates were higher at \$12.50 and \$7.30 per hour for full-time and part-time employees, respectively.

### Fringe Benefits

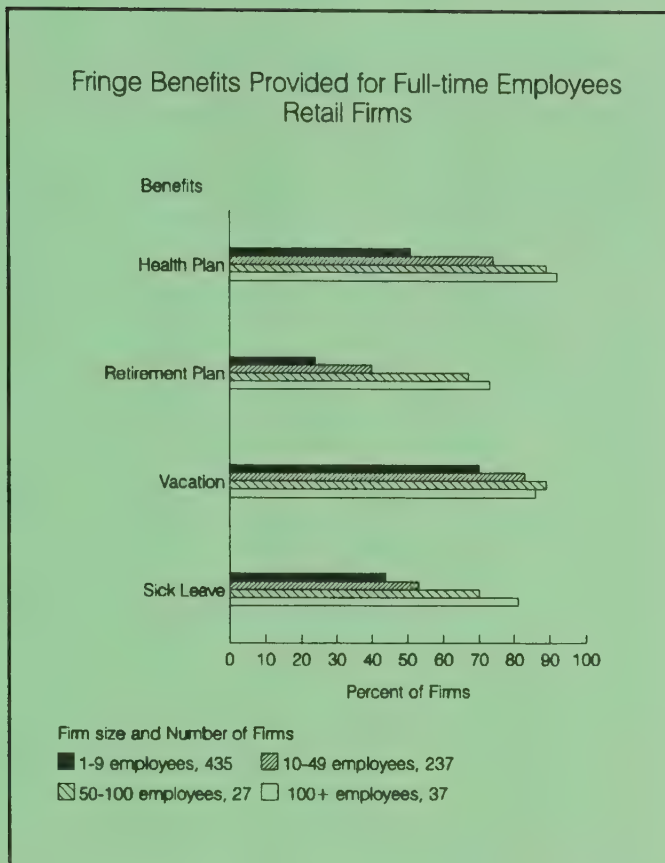
Firms were also surveyed regarding benefits provided to their full-time employees (Figures 5 and 6). Among 435 retail firms with the size of one to nine full-time employees, 51 percent of the firms provided a health plan, 24 percent provided retirement plans, 70 percent provided vacation, and 44 percent provided sick leave for their full-time permanent employees. The results suggest that larger retail firms tend to provide more employee benefits than smaller firms (Figure 5). For the 771 industrial firms, the results also suggest that larger firms provide more employee benefits than smaller firms (Figure 6). A Comparison of Figures 5 and 6 shows that the percentage of the retail firms providing benefits for their full-time employees is lower than the percentage of the industrial firms providing benefits. In both retail and industrial firms, relatively few benefits are provided for part-time employees.

Figure 4

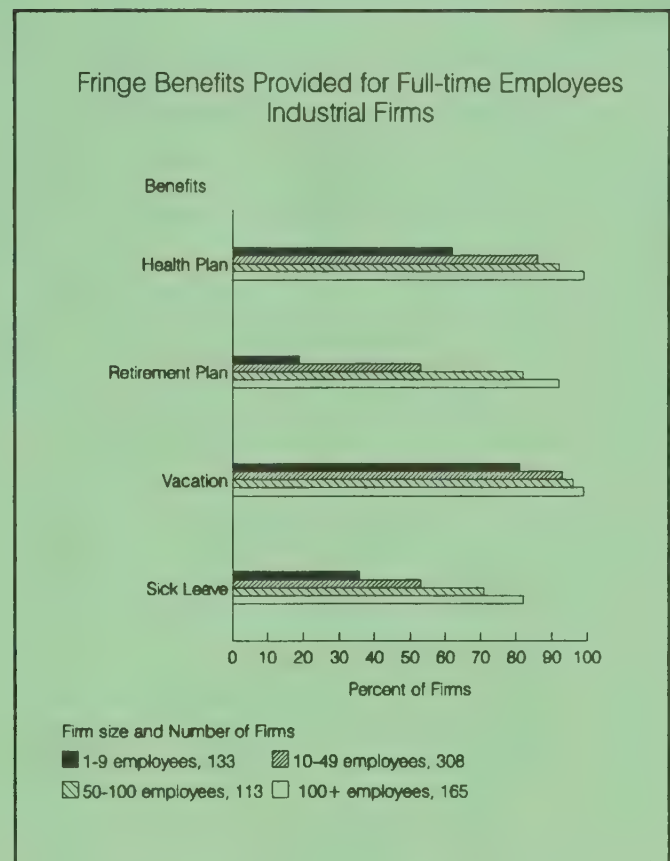




**Figure 5**



**Figure 6**



### Employee Recruitment

Retail firms expressed less difficulties in recruiting any type of employees than industrial firms. Reasons most frequently given for recruitment problems include inadequate labor skills and poor work attitudes. These were also the reasons most frequently given by industrial firms for employee recruitment problems.

### 3. Quality of Life

Quality of life was ranked first among the 14 locational factors by 915 retail firms; 78 percent of the firms considered quality of life to be either good or excellent (Figure 7). The firms ranked the other two quality-of-life factors, access to higher education, and recreational opportunities as second, and fourth, respectively. Labor availability, a business factor, ranked third highest among the retail firms.

For the industrial firms, the same three quality-of-life factors were ranked in the top three (Figure 7). Labor availability ranked fourth highest among the industrial firms.

**Figure 7**

The firms were also asked to rate the services provided by the local communities. The services which ranked most often as excellent or good by 915 retail firms are: fire protection, emergency medical service, electrical service, and police protection (Figure 8). These four services are also ranked most often as excellent or good by 771 industrial firms.

The services which ranked most often as poor or very poor by retail firms are: public transportation, parking, rail service, street and sidewalk cleaning, air service, and sewers (Figure 9). For the industrial firms, the poorest services are: public transportation, street repair, air service, and rail service.

#### **4. Sustaining Economic Development**

Sustaining economic development requires that local economic development professionals stay in contact with their businesses through on going business visits and other forms of communications. These retail firm changes are in general larger than changes planned by industrial firms. Many of these firms need development assistance to carry out their plans. For example, 36 percent of the 915 retail firms were considering expanding or renovating. Over 130 firms with 22 percent of the work force, were planning to open another outlet. Fifty-three firms considered opening the outlet outside of the county, 38 firms to open elsewhere in their businesses areas, and 23 firms to open in a different area in their county.

About 60 retail firms with less than two percent of the work force were considering relocation. Twenty-two firms planned to move in one to three years, 13 firms within six months, 8 firms in six months to one year, and 8 firms in more than three years. Fifty-two retail firms, which employed one percent of the work force, were considering closing/selling their businesses. Seventeen firms planned to close or sell in one to three years, 15 firms within six months, 8 firms in more than three years, and 4 firms in six months to one year.

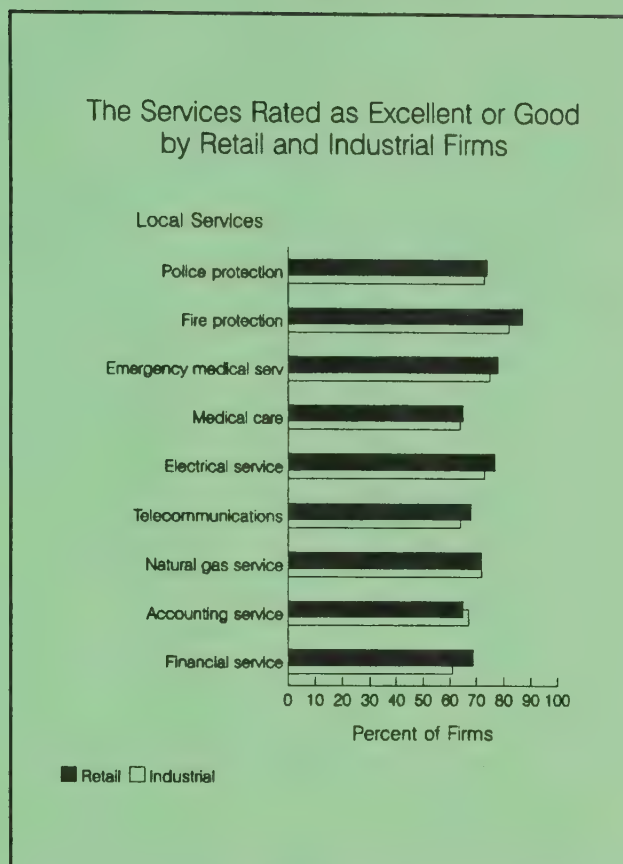


### **III. Retail-Industrial Program Differences**

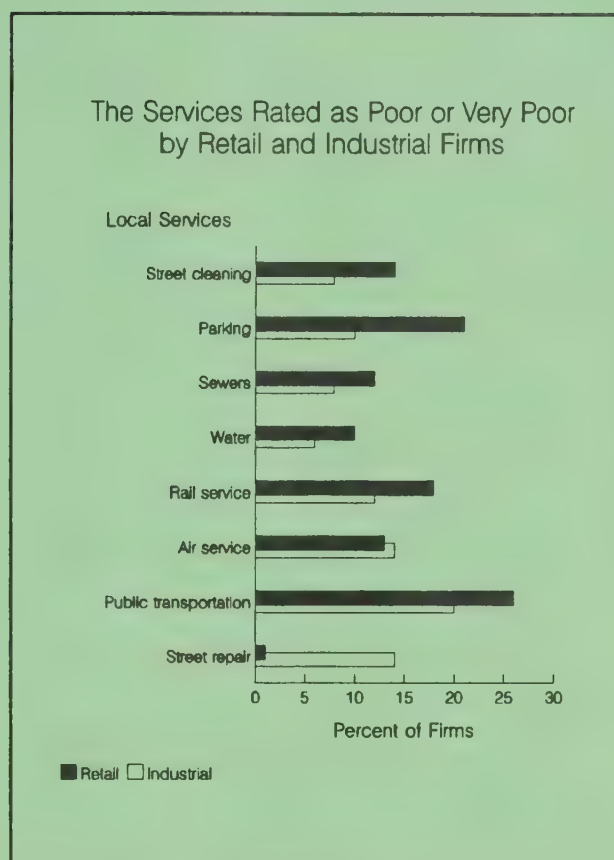
#### **1. Visitation Processes**

The visitation process of retail programs was adapted from the industrial process. However, due to characteristics of retail businesses, the programs differ from the industrial programs in several ways. First, inclusion of the local area visitors bureau in the BR&E Task Force is strongly recommended, while it is not necessary for industrial programs. Visitors bureaus have responsibility for marketing the community to persons outside the community. Thus, they have a critical role in enhancing markets for retail businesses. Second, the scheduling of business visits

**Figure 8**



**Figure 9**



needs to be at a time "convenient" to owners of small family businesses. If scheduled during business hours when the typical manufacturing visit is scheduled, it is likely that the firm interview will be interrupted by incoming customers needing the owner or manager's immediate attention. For this reason, visits should be scheduled for times other than normal business hours or peak business hours where possible. Third, for retail programs focused on tourism firms, to get higher response rates from the firms, the visitation phase of the program should not be conducted during the peak tourism seasons. Seasonal business must "succeed" during a limited time period and usually devote long hours to their business during the tourist season. Business visits are much easier for them outside of the tourist season.

## 2. Implications for BR&E Strategies

Based on the survey results of 22 retail programs and 21 industrial programs, we observe several differences between retail and industrial programs. They are:

### 1. The market structure is different:

The survey results showed that about 75% of the retail firms said that most of their customers either lived in the city/town or outside the city but in the county. Less than 10% of the firms



said that most of their customers were outside this and a neighboring county. On the other hand, the industrial firms reported that they sold about 45% of their products or services in the U.S. outside of Ohio; 31% reported in Ohio outside of the county; and only 17% reported in the city/county. Local market or local customers are very important to most retail businesses. Exceptions are those large retailers and tourism businesses.

2. Retail businesses are predominantly small:

Fifty-four percent of the 915 retail firms are firms with less than 10 employees while only 17% of the 771 industrial firms are the firms with that employment size. This may be related to the firm selection process used in the industrial program where the businesses with less than 10 employees were often excluded from business visits because they contribute little to the industrial base. However, County Business Patterns data is consistent with these relative size distributions.

3. Retail businesses are closely tied to the day of week and time of day shopping patterns:

Fridays and Saturdays were ranked by the retail firms as the two peak business days of the week. Afternoon hours were ranked as the highest sale hours of the day while night hours were ranked as the slowest sale hours. Businesses must respond to customer preferences if they are to remain successful.

4. Advertising is more critical to retail businesses:

About 30% of the firms checked increased advertising or increased group advertising as one of the five most critically needed improvements to retain and expansion their retail businesses. Thirty-one percent of the retail firms expressed interest in seminar topics of marketing for individual business and 23% of the firms expressed interest in joint promotion and marketing. There were only 14% of the industrial firms which expressed interest in marketing for individual business and less than 6% of the industrial firms expressed interest in joint promotion and marketing.

5. Visual and structural features of the retail business and of the business district or shopping area are critical to the vitality of retail businesses:

About 75% of the retail firms checked the improvement of the area exterior as the most critically needed improvement.

#### **IV. Comparison of Tourism vs Retail BR&E Program Survey Results**

The retail and tourism programs are very similar; both address the concerns of the retail or commercial sector. The survey instruments used in the visitation programs are identical with the exception of two questions. However, the focus is different. In the retail program, the emphasis is on the general retail structure of the community and the shopping patterns of residents and customers. The tourism program, on the other hand, focuses on retail businesses which "export" services to those who visit the community and on the spending patterns of tourists and visitors. In this section we compare the aggregated results of the six tourism programs from our project sponsored by the National Coastal Resources Research and Development Institute to the retail business results of the previous two sections. Each tourism program consists of set of business visits and in addition a visitor survey. The visitor

(or consumer or customer) survey is an optional part of the Ohio BR&E program. The six counties were Ashtabula, Erie, Lake, Lorain, Ottawa, and Sandusky.

In total, 256 tourism firms were visited; they employed 8,811 workers. About 4,500 tourists were contacted by the six visitors bureaus with a total of 1,658 responses for a 37 percent response rate. The aggregated results are discussed under four areas: (1) information and education needs, (2) labor force issues, (3) quality of life, and (4) sustaining economic development.

## 1. Information and Education Needs

### Business Factors

The tourism business responses to business factor changes (Figure 10) are similar to all retail businesses (Figure 1). Among the 256 tourism firms, 62 percent of the firms increased the number of customers; 56 percent increased the sales quantity volume; 60 percent increased the sales dollar volume; and 47 percent increased their profits. About 27 percent of the firms responded that their profits declined over the last three years.

### Business Hours/Days/Seasons and Customer Location

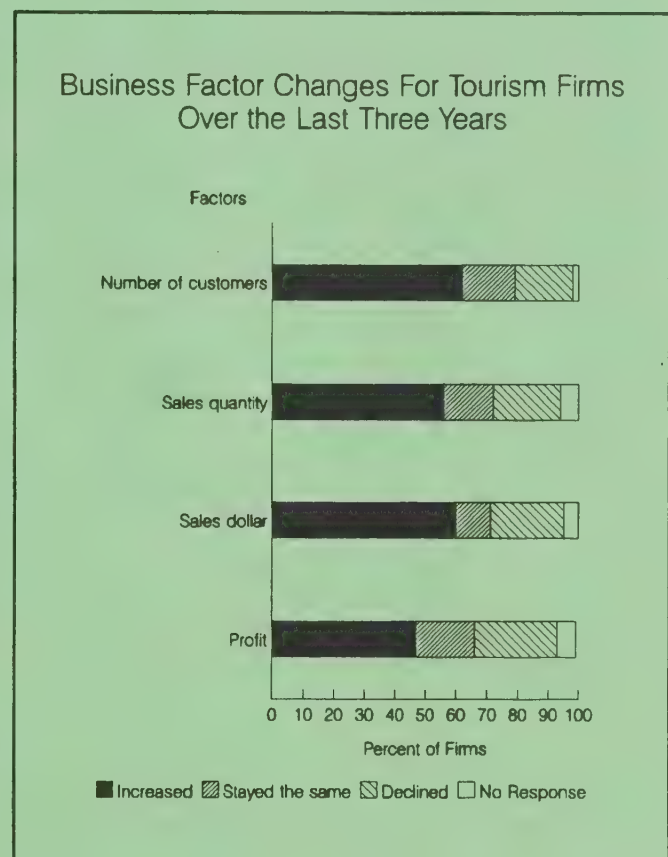
Aggregate rankings of 256 firms's responses for business days revealed that the peak business days are Saturday and Friday with weights of 1,372 and 1,233, respectively. They were followed by Sundays, Thursdays, Wednesdays, and Mondays. Tuesday was ranked as the slowest sales day with a weight of 664. Sunday was the slowest sales day for retail firms.

Rankings of business hours revealed that the peak business hours are the afternoon hours with a weight of 853. Lunch hours ranked second with a weight of 755; and night hours last with a weight of 321.

The 256 tourism firms ranked Summer highest as a business season; giving it a weight of 760. Fall and Spring were ranked very closely with weights of 615 and 583, respectively. Winter ranked last with a weight of 375.

Similar to retail firms in general, most of the customers of tourism oriented businesses live outside the city but in the county and in the city/town with weights of 732 and 661, respectively. People living in a neighboring county ranked third with a weight of 558; and people living outside this and a neighboring county ranked fourth with a weight of 324. In other words, most tourism businesses depend more highly on residents than on tourists.

Figure 10



### **Business Loans**

Eighty-nine of the 256 tourism firms surveyed indicated they had sought or applied for business loans. Seventy-three of these 89 firms sought loans from commercial banks; nine firms sought loans from savings and loans; six firms sought loans from other institutions or programs. Reasons most frequently cited for requesting loans included financing inventory (30 firms) followed by financing operating capital (27 firms).

### **Advertising Issues**

The daily newspaper were ranked as the top advertising media by 70 percent of the firms. It was followed by yellow pages (68%), visitor guides (63%), and brochures (61%). For the retail firms, yellow pages, daily newspaper and weekly newspaper were ranked as the top three.

Among the 256 firms surveyed, 137 indicated they shared advertising expenses. Among the 107 firms not sharing advertising expenses, 72 firms indicated that they would consider sharing advertising expenses.

### **Shopping Atmosphere/Hospitality**

The tourism firms surveyed presented a very positive picture of their areas' hospitality. Hospitality was rated as excellent or good by 68 percent of the firms.

### **Information/Assistance Requests**

The types of information and seminars/workshops in which tourism firms expressed the greatest interest are listed in Figures 11 and 12 along with the percentage of firms expressing interest. The 256 tourism firms most frequently requested information on: (1) consumer surveying and market analysis, (2) federal and state low interest loans, (3) creating an historical preservation district, and (4) grants for rehabilitating buildings.

Seminar topics of greatest interest to the tourism firms include: (1) marketing and advertising for individual business, (2) joint promotion and marketing, (3) general business management, (4) merchandising, (5) employee management, and (6) salesmanship/customer relationships (Figure 12).

### **Needed Improvements Issues**

The five highest ranking needed improvements to retain and expand tourism businesses were (also see Figure 13):

- (1) Improvement of exterior atmosphere of the area;
- (2) Additional businesses;
- (3) Special events or promotions;
- (4) Increased group advertising; and
- (5) More variety of places to eat.

Increased group advertising replaced the fourth ranked reduction of traffic congestion by all retail firms.



Figure 11

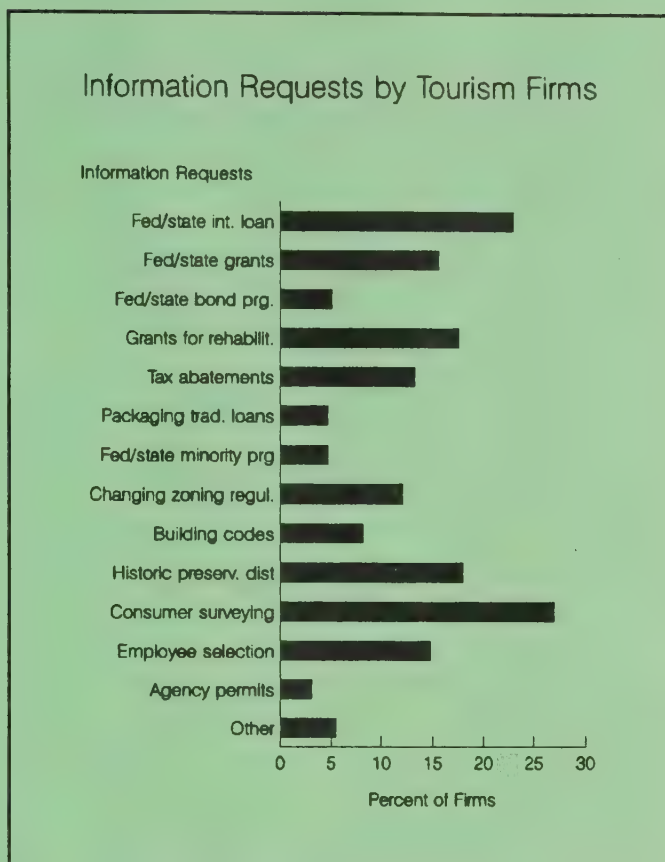


Figure 12



The tourists were also asked to rank the three most important needs for improved tourism recreation in Lake Erie Coastal Counties. The survey results showed that better public facilities, less traffic congestion, more public parks and beaches, more places to eat, and more competitive pricing were ranked as the top five needed improvements (Figure 14).

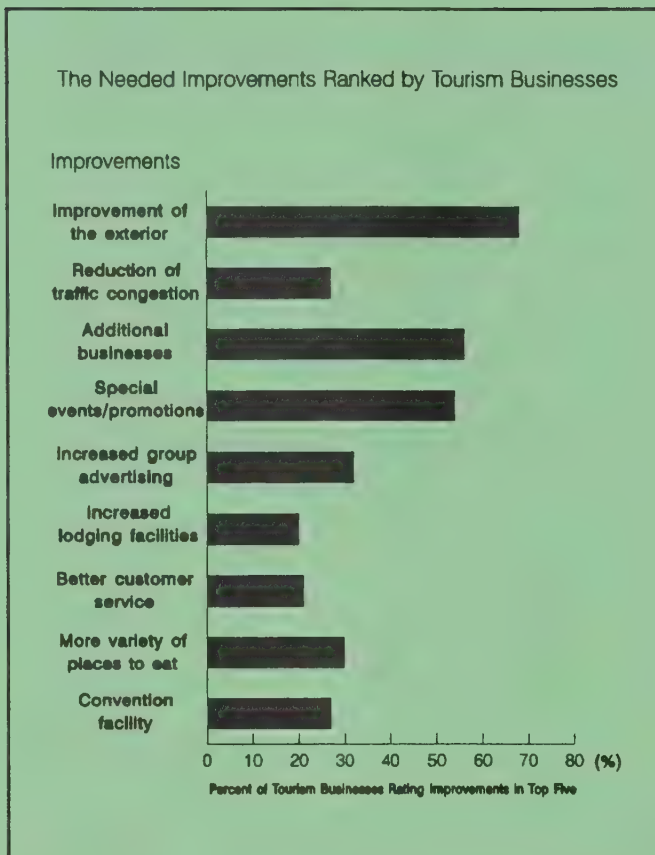
### Tourism Customer Survey Findings

Unique to the tourism programs, each county also conducted a tourism customer survey. The tourism customer survey is useful in identifying the needed marketing efforts to attract more tourists and local problems which need to be addressed to improve the recreational climate. The tourism customer survey was conducted by each county visitors bureau. These six county visitors bureaus contacted 4,500 tourists to participate in the program. There were 1,658 surveys returned in total representing about a 37 percent response rate.

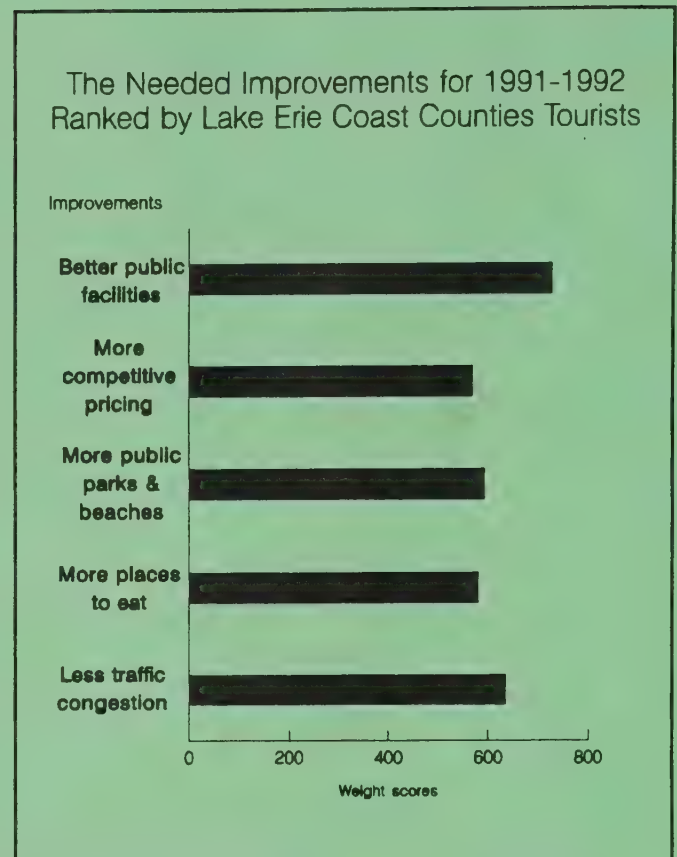
The typical Lake Erie Coastal Counties tourist is married with an average family income of \$42,850. Most tourists (56 percent) were from Ohio. About 62 percent of the surveyed tourists were with their spouse or family on the trip. Forty-one percent of the tourists planned the trip less than one month before they came to Lake Erie Coastal Counties.

Thirteen percent of tourists did not stay overnight on the trip. When they stayed, hotel and/or motel was the major lodging facility used by about 51 percent of the tourists. It is followed by campground with 16 percent.

**Figure 13**



**Figure 14**



When asked about what best described their primary recreation area, 39 percent of the tourists checked Lake Erie Coastal Counties, 33 percent checked areas outside of Ohio, and 15 percent checked other areas of Ohio.

The Lake Erie Coastal County tourists spent about 25 percent on lodging, 25 percent at restaurants, 11 percent on transportation, 11 percent on attraction fees, and 6 percent in clothing stores (Figure 15). However, there is diversity in the distribution of expenditures across the six counties. The 542 tourists contacted in Erie County spent about 5 percent more than all respondents on attraction fees; Cedar Point is located in Erie County. The 252 Ottawa tourists, the center of sport angling on Lake Erie, spent about 4 percent more on marinas and/or fishing. The 307 Lorain County tourists spent about 3 percent less on attraction fees; the 133 Sandusky County tourists spent about 3 percent less on transportation; the 250 Lake County tourists spent about 7 percent less on lodging but 7 percent more on restaurants; the 174 Ashtabula County tourists spent about 6 percent less on lodging but 6 percent more on groceries where camping is a major recreational activity.

Tourists primarily relied on recommendations from friends and previous experiences when choosing where to recreate. Other than word-of-mouth referrals and past experience, brochures, visitor guides and newspapers were the most important advertising mediums to bring tourists to recreate in the Lake Erie Coastal Counties. First time Lake Erie visitors most relied on word-of-mouth referrals and brochures.

**Figure 15**

Sixty-four percent of tourists rated prices as either very competitive or competitive. Another 27 percent of tourists rated prices as slightly expensive and four percent of tourists rated them as very expensive. For the quality of the services and goods, 37 percent of the tourists rated them as either excellent or above average.

## **2. Labor Force Issues**

### **Work Force Ratings**

The 256 tourism firms rated their work forces very favorably for both attitude and productivity. Eighty-one percent of the firms rated their employees' attitude as either good or excellent. Seventy-nine percent of the firms rated their work forces' quality to be either good or excellent.

### **Employment Concentrations and Wage Rates**

About 45 percent of the tourism firms surveyed were small businesses employing fewer than 10 employees. Only six percent of the tourism firms were large firms employing 100 or more workers. The majority of their work forces were employed by firms with 100 or more workers: 65 percent of the workers were employed by firms with 100 or more workers and only 5 percent of the workers were employed by firms with fewer than 10 workers.

The average wage rates for the tourism firms full-time employees and part-time employees were \$7.70 and \$5.00 per hour, respectively.

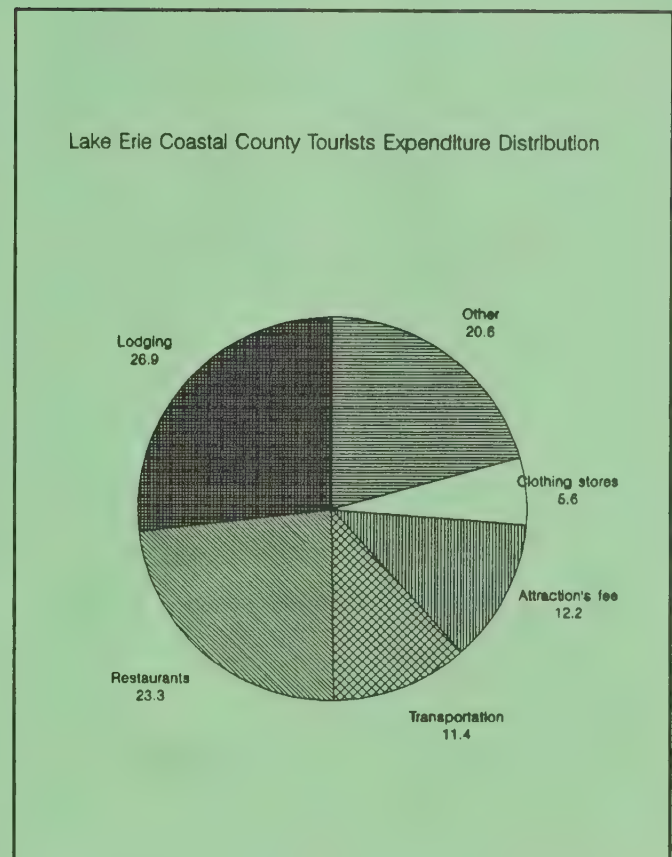
### **Fringe Benefits**

Firms were also surveyed regarding benefits provided to their full-time employees (Figure 16). Among 88 tourism firms with the size of one to nine employees, 39 percent of the firms provided a health plan, 16 percent provided retirement plans, 51 percent provided vacation, and 28 percent provided sick leave for their full-time permanent employees. The results suggest that larger tourism firms tend to provide more employee benefits than smaller firms (Figure 16). Also, relatively few benefits are provided for part-time employees.

### **Employee Recruitment**

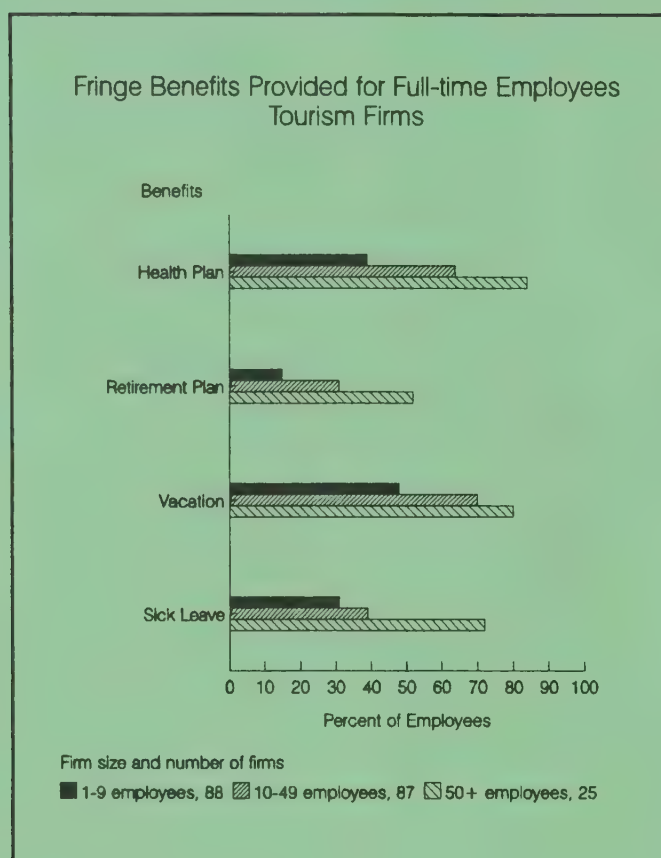
The types of employees firms expressed the greatest problems in recruiting included sales, maintenance, and janitorial workers. The reason most frequently given for recruitment problems was poor work attitudes.

In ranking services provided by the local communities, the services which ranked most often as excellent or good by the 256 tourism firms were: fire protection, police protection, emergency medical service, electrical service, and natural gas service (Figure 18).

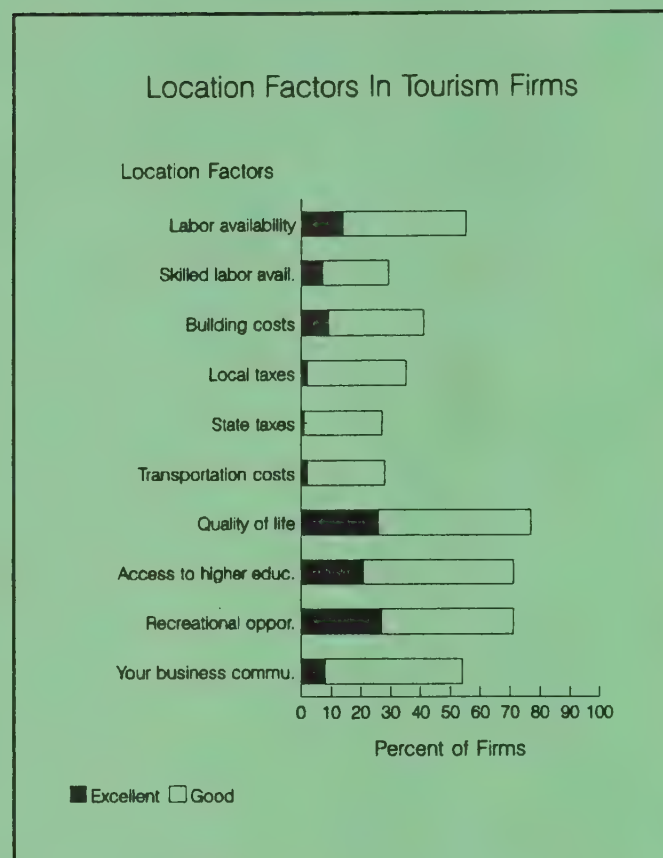




**Figure 16**



**Figure 17**



The services which ranked most often as poor or very poor by tourism firms were: public transportation, parking, snow and ice removal, rail service, street and sidewalk cleaning, and air service (Figure 19).

### **3. Quality of Life**

Quality of life was ranked first among 10 locational factors by the 256 tourism firms; 77 percent of the firms considered quality of life to be either good or excellent (Figure 17). The firms ranked the other three quality-of-life factors, recreational opportunities, access to higher education, and the business community, as second, third, and fourth, respectively.

Figure 18

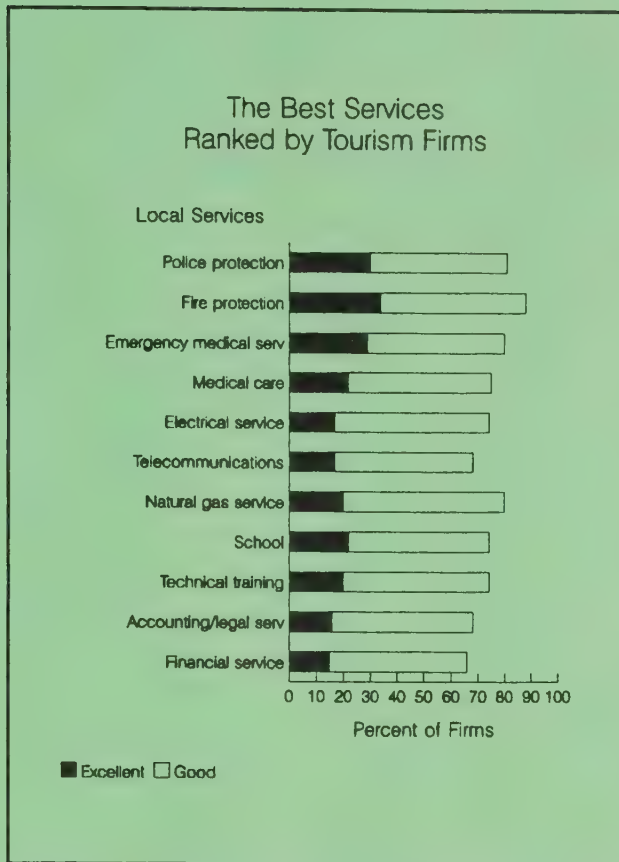
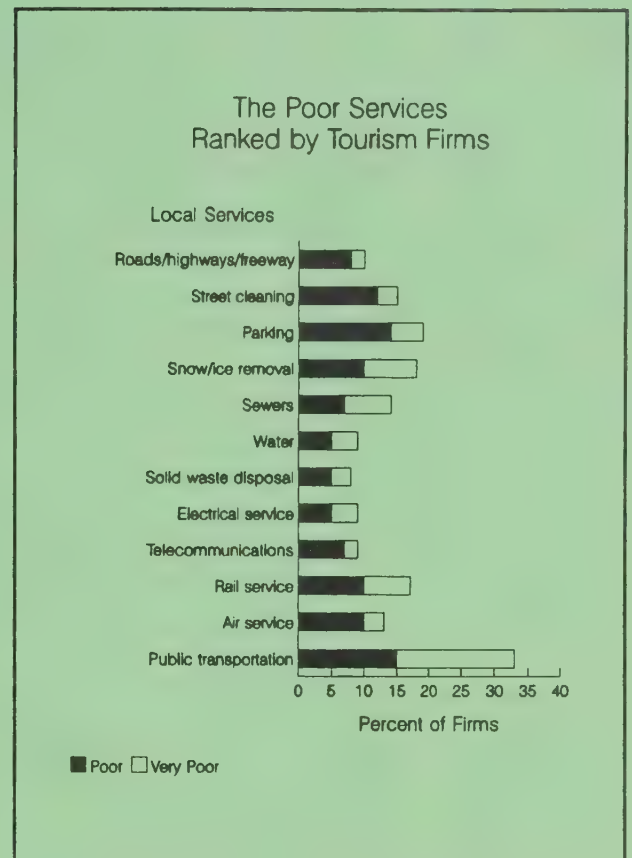


Figure 19



#### 4. Sustaining Economic Development

Staying in contact with tourism businesses is as important as with retail firms in general. Tourism firm changes are equally as large as for other retail firms. About 49 percent of the 256 tourism firms were considering expanding or renovating. Twenty-eight firms with 15 percent of the work force, were planning to open another outlet. Nineteen firms considered opening the outlet outside of the county, 10 firms to open elsewhere in their businesses areas, and 5 firms to open in a different area in their county.

Nine tourism firms with less than one percent of the work force were considering relocation. Three firms planned to move in one to three years, 2 firms in six months to one year, 1 firm within six months, and 1 firm in more than three years. Fifteen tourism firms, which employed less than one percent of the work force, were considering closing/selling their businesses. Five firms planned to close or sell in one to three years, 3 firms in more than three years, 3 firms within six months, and 2 firms in six months to one year.

## V. References

- Loveridge, Scott and Thomas R. Smith, "Fostering Partnerships Between Local Governments and Rural Businesses" Public Productivity and Management Review, (XV:3), 1992, pp. 329-340.
- Morse, George and Ellen Hagey, "Steps in Conducting Local Business Visitation" in The Retention and Expansion of Existing Businesses, Iowa State University Press, Ames, 1990, pp. 44-65.
- Smith, Thomas R., George Morse and Linda Lobao, "Measuring Impacts of Business Retention and Expansion Visitation Programs" Journal of Community Development Society (23:1), 1992
- USDC Bureau of the Census (Various Issues), *County Business Patterns, Ohio*, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

---

### Acknowledgement of support

This program is the result of work sponsored partially by the Ohio Department of Development grant 93-058, the National Coastal Resources Research and Development Institute under grants NA87AA-D-SG065 and NA16RG0167-01 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the Ohio Sea Grant College Program, project A/EP-1 under grant NA90AA-D-SG496 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the U.S. Department of Commerce and from the State of Ohio.





# Notes

## **II. COORDINATORS AND THE TASK FORCE**

This section is divided into two parts: Responsibilities and Certified Training for Coordinators and Assistant Coordinators and Task Force Responsibilities and Meetings.

### **A. BR&E Coordinator and Assistant BR&E Coordinator**

The BR&E Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator are local people who provide leadership for the local program. Generally, we recommend that the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator be a staff member of the county Cooperative Extension office, a local chamber of commerce, community improvement corporation, or a member of other local development organizations. A few Coordinators have also been retired executives. Usually, the Coordinators work one day per week on the BR&E program during the first two months. During this time, the Coordinators are completing the Certified Training and compiling the final list of volunteers and firms. Programs usually take about nine months to complete, depending upon how quickly volunteers visit firms.

#### **Responsibilities**

The BR&E Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator's main responsibilities are to organize and run the local program. In conducting the program, many program functions must be carried out. How these functions are divided between the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator can vary depending on the capabilities and time commitment of the two leaders. As a beginning, we suggest the following division of responsibilities.

#### **The Coordinator's Suggested Responsibilities**

1. Introducing the BR&E program to the community;
2. Preparing a work plan;
3. Assembling the Task Force;
4. Organizing and conducting the Task Force meetings;
5. Collecting surveys and removing cover sheets before they are distributed;
6. Following-up on problems or concerns noted in the surveys (with the help of the Consultant and Task Force);
7. Publicizing the program (e.g. preparing news releases to local media); and
8. Organizing and conducting the final community meeting.

#### **The Assistant Coordinator's Suggested Responsibilities**

1. Work with Coordinator in preparing a work plan;
2. Recruiting Volunteer Visitors;
3. Arranging training of Volunteer Visitors for their firm visits and interviews in cooperation with the university faculty/staff facilitator;
4. Plan visits and interviews with local firms;
5. Help Coordinator, Consultant(s), and Task Force with follow-up activities;



6. Distribute copies of the completed surveys to the consultant and the BR&E staff.
7. Assist Coordinator in planning the community meeting and presenting the program findings and recommendations; and
8. Conduct program proceedings, such as Task Force meetings, in the absence of the Coordinator.

**B. Certified Training for BR&E Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator**

Since the Coordinators are responsible for carrying out the BR&E program, they must complete a Certified Training correspondence/field course to become familiar with the program so that they can organize it locally. The training is a correspondence course; that is, the Coordinators take the course in their own community and at their own convenience.

The first part of the Certified Training, assignments 1 through 5, require about four hours to complete; the second part, assignments 6 through 8, require a day. The course involves several reading assignments and field experiences. By the end of the course the Coordinators will be familiar with:

1. the objectives, costs, and benefits of a BR&E program;
2. the volunteer visitor training;
3. the business visits and follow-up procedures; and
4. the application of local businesses' economic outlooks.

**Assignments**

Below is a list of assignments that BR&E Coordinators must complete to become certified. Upon completion of these assignments, participants will be recognized as "Certified BR&E Coordinators". Coordinators should complete the first part, assignments 1 through 5, and send their work to the BR&E staff. After reviewing the first part, the BR&E staff will schedule a day during which it and community leaders will conduct practice visits. These visits are part of the second half of the Certified Training.

1. Read the article "Success Stories in BR&E Business Visitation Programs" and answer the questions for Assignment 1.
2. View the videotape "The Ohio Business Retention and Expansion Program" and answer the questions for Assignment 2.
3. Read the factsheet "The BR&E Partnership" and answer the questions for Assignment 3.
4. Interview two Certified BR&E Coordinators by telephone or in person, asking them about their programs' primary benefits and problems, and their suggestions for making your program successful. See Assignment 4.
5. Based on the interviews in assignment 4, write a short summary of a retention and expansion "success story". See Assignment 5.

After completing assignments 1 through 5, send copies to the state BR&E staff. Assignments 1 through 8 begin on page 6 of this section.

Assignments 6, 7, and 8 can be completed in one day. After completing these three assignments, send copies to the state BR&E staff.

6. Conduct practice visits and interviews with two local businesses with the BR&E staff member, BR&E Consultant, and one or more Task Force members. After the interviews, prepare one-page summaries based on the information from the U.S. Industrial Outlook about the economic trends facing these businesses. See Assignment 6.
7. Hold a Task Force meeting following the practice visits to discuss the role of the Task Force and the objectives of the program, and to plan the volunteer visitor training sessions. See Assignment 7.
8. Review the rest of this handbook. Meet with the BR&E Consultant and prepare a work plan listing tasks, persons responsible, and deadlines. See Assignment 8.

## **C. Task Force Responsibilities and Meetings**

### **Task Force Responsibilities**

The Task Force has four primary responsibilities:

#### **1. Recruiting Volunteer Visitors and assigning firm visitations;**

Each Task Force member should personally request the participation of several (perhaps five) potential volunteers whom they know.

Most of the Volunteer Visitors will have been recruited by the time the Practice Visits are held. If a few more are still needed, however, as is often the case, the Task Force should be delegated the responsibility of recruiting additional volunteers.

In addition, a few of your Volunteer Visitors will not complete their visits for various reasons. To prevent your program from being delayed excessively, the Task Force should discuss and ratify its policy on reassigning firms to visitors.

#### **2. Determine the local questions;**

Although the survey used during the interviews is standardized, each community may include up to five local questions. These local questions should concern local development issues. For example, the widening of a major thoroughfare, increasing a sewage treatment plant's capacity, the effects of tax abatement, the use of vocational schools, the utility of upgrading a regional airport, or the desirability of downtown development may be pertinent issues in your community about which the Task Force would like firms' opinions.

#### **3. Address local concerns and problems cited in the surveys by local firms;**

When the surveys are returned to the Coordinator, certain complaints or concerns made by firms will be of a local nature, such as zoning regulations or street repair. It is the Task Force's job to discuss these issues and to try to solve them. Issues of a nonlocal nature will be addressed by the Consultant and simple concerns, such as a firm wanting more information about a certain topic, such as financing, will be handled by the Coordinator and Consultant.

In most cases, the Task Force meets on a regular basis as the surveys are returned to review 10 or 12 surveys per meeting and to discuss solutions to the problems and concerns noted. More discussion about following-up on the survey information is discussed in Section VII.

#### **4. Write the economic development recommendations.**

After the BR&E staff completes analysis of the data and the first draft of the report, the Task Force, Coordinators, Consultant, and the BR&E staff will meet to review and discuss the findings. Based on the findings, the Task Force will write its recommendations for future economic development efforts in the community. The process of reviewing the rough draft and writing the recommendations is discussed further in Section VIII.



## Timeframe

The BR&E staff or volunteer trainer will review the timeframe with the Task Force so that each member realizes when each stage, such as the volunteer training and visits, will occur. This review is important because members can see the beginning and end of this effort.

Task Force activities are conducted through a series of meetings. There are primarily six series of meetings as listed below. Meetings are considered to be in series rather than as individual meetings since a number of meetings may be required to accomplish a particular task, such as survey follow-up discussion, for example.

## Meetings

<u>Meeting Series</u>	<u>Purpose of Meeting</u>	<u>When Held</u>
1	Initial Task Force Meeting- primarily to assemble Task Force	Prior to Final Application
2	Task Force Training Meeting	Same day as Practice Visits- afternoon/See Section V-B for more detail
3	Review of Surveys/Discussion of Follow-up  Includes: Review of secondary data/ employment profile, outlook for key firms, and review of state programs	As surveys are returned to Coordinator/See Section VII for more detail
4	Discuss Survey Results & Develop Strategic Plan	After draft report is received from BR&E staff/See Section VIII for more detail
5	Review and Adopt Strategic Plan	2 to 3 weeks after Meeting Series #4 See Section VIII for more detail
6	Final Community Meeting	4 to 5 weeks after Meeting Series #5/ See Section X for more detail



### ASSIGNMENT I: READING

Read the article "Success Stories in BR&E Business Visitation Programs" and answer the following questions with either "true" or "false".

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. A BR&E visitation program is usually the first step in an overall BR&E effort.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. In the short-run, one of the impacts of the program is to increase employment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. In the long-run, one of the impacts of the program is to improve the competitiveness of local establishments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Only in a few instances has the program generated a pro-business attitude or feeling to the establishments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Greater cooperation among local development groups is an overlooked but valuable side-benefit to the program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The organizations about which establishments complain really do not benefit from this program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. One drawback to the program is that it has no connection to attraction efforts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Strategic economic planning can be and has been an important result of the program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The program can help broaden informal networks of communication.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Although effective, the BR&E program has lost some popularity as evidenced by the decreasing number of states implementing such programs.





# Retention & Expansion



## Business Visitation Programs:

# Success Stories

Written by George W. Morse, Robert T. McLaughlin,  
and Ellen W. Hagey | Edited by Judith Gildner

©1987 The North Central Regional  
Center for Rural Development  
Iowa State University  
Ames, Iowa 50011

The credibility of an economic development program largely rests on its accomplishments or success. In economic development, as in most community development programs, there are many ways to measure success. Measuring the number of jobs created from development efforts is relatively simple; measuring the improved cooperation among local organizations or the development of strategic planning is not. This article describes the major types of success or benefits in a retention and expansion (R & E) business visitation program. Examples from local R & E programs in Idaho, Georgia, New Jersey, Ohio, and Wisconsin illustrate different types of success.

This pamphlet is the last in a series that evolved from the Business Retention and Expansion Conference held in Columbus, Ohio, in October 1985. The conference was sponsored by the Ohio State University and the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, with associate sponsorship by the Farm Foundation, and assistant sponsorship by the USDA Extension Service.

## Organizing the Program

An R & E visitation of businesses is usually the first step in the overall R & E program. Typically, trained volunteers, in teams of two, visit local businesses to identify and record the local concerns or problems affecting their operations, and to determine if they need technical, labor, managerial, financial, or legal assistance. The volunteers use a questionnaire during the business visit to gather information about the firm and the firm's concerns or problems. Following the interview, the team returns the questionnaire to the local R & E coordinator.

The coordinator is the local leader of the program who reviews each questionnaire and decides on the appropriate follow-up action. Local issues are handled by the coordinator, who contacts organizations or professionals who can help solve a problem mentioned by a firm. Referring firms to these organizations or professionals or simply sending pertinent information to the firm may suffice.

Some local issues are handled by the R & E task force. The task force is an interdisciplinary group of eight or 10 local leaders representing local government, civic organizations, the school system, banks, and other organizations interested in local economic development. The interdisciplinary character of the task force is ideal when members discuss possible solutions to concerns, issues, or problems mentioned by local firms.

Issues of a nonlocal nature may be handled by the R & E consultant or the R & E task force. The consultant is an economic development professional who is knowledgeable about state and federal economic development programs. The consultant's extensive network of development professionals and his/her knowledge of available programs is critically important to successful follow-up work during a program.

After the coordinator reviews each questionnaire, a copy is sent to the state R & E leaders (usually located at a university) where the data are coded and analyzed. The results are sent to the task force, which reviews them along with secondary information describing the community. The task force writes recommendations based on this information.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the successes of the R & E visitation program tend to occur immediately, while others take much longer to realize. The short-run impacts of the program include:

- Demonstration of a community's pro-business attitude.
- Development of a high degree of cooperation between public and private development agencies and leaders.



- Creation of a forum in which sensitive information on the needs or complaints of businesses can be addressed effectively, yet confidentially.
- Collection of data on a community's strengths and weaknesses as a place to do business.

The long-run impacts of the program include:

- Improved understanding of a community's economic outlook.
- Development of a comprehensive strategic plan for encouraging local economic development.
- Implementation of programs that improve the competitiveness of local firms and assist in expanding their markets.
- Development of informal channels of communication among local development-related organizations to facilitate flow of information.
- Retention and expansion of jobs, income, and investment in the community.

## Demonstrating a Pro-Business Attitude

As soon as it is publicly announced that a local group is going to conduct the R & E program, local businesses often start to feel more appreciated and perceive a positive shift in community attitudes toward them. This feeling is strongly reinforced by business visitations.

In a 1984 study of Ohio R & E visitation coordinators, the demonstration of a pro-business attitude was rated as the most important goal of their respective local programs.<sup>2</sup> As Mary Lee Gecowets, executive director of the Urbana (Ohio) Area Chamber of Commerce, said, "The R & E program is one in which you can't lose. At the very least, you'll demonstrate to firms that the community appreciates them and [you will] probably be able to help a few firms."

A 1987 telephone survey of local R & E coordinators in five states found that many communities have neglected their most important resource: existing local firms.<sup>3</sup> Debra Eckes, economic research director for the Green Bay (Wisconsin) Area Chamber of Commerce, stated, "Instead of thinking in terms of 'growth,' this last deep recession has sobered us a lot. We're thinking now that we ought to at least give some thought to what our community already has."

Karen Crausby, director of the Catoosa County (Georgia) Economic Development Commission, echoed this sentiment. "We're saying, 'Look, we realize that maybe 70 percent or more of our jobs are created by existing industries. We're not forgetting that. So consider expanding here before you go outside the county.' I went to [local business leaders] and said, 'Let's go over this quiz and answer some basic questions. I want to answer your questions.' That's when they know you're really there to help. . . . So many communities can lose an existing industry because they didn't pay attention to it, to its needs; they didn't listen to its complaints. . . . Now when we prepare a brochure or press release, we send it to our existing

industries. When one of them expands, we tell it we're glad it's here. You need to treat it just like you would someone you're trying to recruit into the county."

Steven Heller, the coordinator of training for new local R & E programs for New Jersey Bell Telephone, emphasizes that the attitude of local government is an important factor in a firm's decision to relocate or stay in the community. He cited a study by David Birch as helpful in considering this phenomenon.<sup>4</sup>

When volunteers from the local chamber of commerce, government, education institutions, and other development-related agencies are mobilized to express a pro-business attitude, business owners and managers are more likely to choose to stay and expand within the community. The number of visits is a measure of the extent to which the pro-business attitude has been conveyed successfully. In addition, the number of media stories about the local R & E program and the contributions of existing firms is a good proxy measure of pro-business attitude impact. Finally, the publication of a final program report—which demonstrates that the program is more than just a public relations event—can contribute to the pro-business attitude.

In many of the early programs, expressing a positive attitude toward business was often the only goal and primary "success" of the R & E efforts. Yet, if the program participants limit their sight to only this public relations goal, subsequent expansion of jobs and income is less likely to occur.

## Cooperative Spirit among Local Development Groups

Developing a spirit of cooperation among local development groups is an important side benefit of R & E visitation programs. A recent case study of one local Ohio R & E program suggests that cooperation occurs and is so highly valued partly because the local development leaders come to discover that they share important common interests and values. From this discovery of shared intentions, and through the development of friendships among development leaders, powerful networks emerge for, as one participant said, "all pulling in the same direction."

The program often dissipates local rivalries among development leaders. By conducting community-wide surveys of firms to identify needs and complaints and also desires for the future, R & E groups can formulate development plans that are founded upon widespread consensus.

Jack Marineau, director of the Economic Development Commission in Moscow, Idaho, explained that prior to the R & E program his community had been sharply divided concerning local development issues. In Moscow, citizens affiliated with the local university had been interested in retaining economic assets, Marineau explained, while the business community advocated a policy of aggressive growth and firm recruitment. Business groups debated with environmental conservationist groups. Those who owned and managed



existing firms sometimes feared the potential competitive threats that newly attracted firms might constitute.

As a result, Marineau said, efforts to formulate and enact development plans in Moscow were often impeded. Marineau sees the R & E survey process as having been crucial in making "ours a community-wide organization. It gave us credence within all of the diverse groups in our community. . . . Right at the beginning, our community was seen as not being a special interest group, but a group which had the interests of the community as a whole in mind. And then, that's the group that worked to form a plan of action [after the survey process]."

While the survey process removes barriers to local cooperation, it is not the only aspect of the program that does so. The formation of an R & E task force to respond to concerns identified by the visitation survey also may play an important role. In one community, divisiveness between the leaders of various local factions led to a heated public debate in which one leader suffered a stroke. "This appalled me so much," said this community's R & E coordinator, "that I decided then and there to find a way to get people to work together. When I first heard about the R & E idea I thought this might be [the way]." By the end of the program, "these same people who had [once] fought each other are now working together—and actually enjoying it." (This local coordinator requested anonymity due to the sensitive nature of his story.)

While very few economic development programs are operated on a countywide basis with the collaboration of several cities and chambers of commerce, 14 of the 17 R & E visitation Ohio programs conducted in 1986-87 were countywide programs. There is a much greater sense of cooperation and less fear of raiding in the R & E program than in industrial attraction programs.

Through the R & E task force, members initially may recognize that they need to coordinate the efforts of their respective organizations, and over time they come to enjoy the coordination process. At the conclusion of their task force responsibilities, many indicate that they have come to value highly not only the practical advantages of coordination, but also the personal benefits of cooperation.

## Create Forum for Addressing Problems

One advantage the R & E program has, unlike many conventional approaches to local development, is that program participants create a nonpublic forum in which often sensitive information regarding business complaints and concerns is kept confidential. This benefits both the firms and local organizations with which they sometimes may perceive themselves as having problems.

The firm whose concerns are identified by the visitation benefits by knowing, as Crausby said, "that someone

cares about you," and often by having its problem resolved. Eckes described the story of a local firm that had lost thousands of dollars from periodic flooding of a nearby drainage ditch. The local R & E task force, comprising local chamber, government, and other leaders, was able to resolve this problem "within two days of our finding out about it."

The organizations who receive complaints also benefit by being able either to resolve a problem or to explain why the problem cannot or need not be resolved. In a few cases, as one R & E coordinator explained, "the firm's complaint proves not to be well-founded, so you can't just assume that the business is always right. But what you do need to do is find out whether they really do have a problem and then help whenever you can."

A firm in one community, for example, felt that the local utility company had been providing poor service because it had "refused" to provide a particular kind of current. The problem was relayed by the R & E task force to the utility company manager, who, in turn, investigated and learned that such current would not be appropriate for the firm's equipment. As a result, the business owner thanked the utility manager for "taking the time to come out here" and for explaining the utility's actions. The utility executive, meanwhile, appreciated being able, he said, "to satisfy them that we are here, that we care, and that we want to help them grow." Thus, action is not necessarily required to solve some of the problems identified through the visitation process.

By keeping information regarding local business concerns confidential, businesses interviewed by the R & E volunteers as well as local development organizations are saved unnecessary embarrassment. Thus, leaders of these organizations benefit by being able to become more effective through their comprehensive knowledge of business concerns without having to suffer any loss in credibility.

## Data on Community Strengths and Weaknesses

The survey forms used by most states' R & E programs ask questions concerning whether the firm is considering relocation, closure, or expansion; what specific problems or complaints the firm has; whether and in what ways the firm might wish assistance in resolving these problems; and what the businesses' perceptions are regarding the community as a place in which to do business. By collecting and aggregating this survey information, the local program is able to generate a wealth of information on the "positives" and "negatives" of the community's business climate.

The positive findings may be used by the task force member organizations and other local development groups to attract new firms to the community. Negative findings are either quietly addressed or are identified as reasons to develop new local program and policy initiatives. Negative information is essential to identify ways to improve the local business climate.



As a result of the Fayette County, Ohio, R & E visitation survey, explains Bill Grunkemeyer, good labor/management relations were found to exist among its local firms. Using these data, Grunkemeyer, an extension agent who heads the Fayette County development program, has been able to correct the misleading view that the county had poor labor/management relations. What had once been a major obstacle for recruiting became a centerpiece for attraction efforts.

## Understanding the Community's Economic Outlook

Changes in the demand for locally produced goods and services are the major determinants of the economic outlook for individual firms and, in the aggregate, for the community. Changes in the cost of production, new technology, new products, and other supply factors can influence price and thus, the market share for a particular firm's products. While communities can seldom control these factors, they can take advantage of positive trends and minimize the costs of negative ones.

After examining employment trends in the retail and wholesale trade sectors, using shift-share analysis, the R & E task force in Fayette County, Ohio, recommended a greater emphasis on these sectors. Their examination showed that retail and wholesale trade in the county should have grown by 670 jobs from 1977 to 1985, while it actually lost 248 jobs, resulting in 918 fewer jobs than would have been expected based on national trends. The service sector had 288 fewer jobs than expected. Bill Grunkemeyer reported, "These data confirmed our need to work directly with the retail and service sectors as sources of employment rather than to just assume that spin-off jobs would be created as we had expansion in manufacturing firms. The two go hand-in-hand. The more retail and services the community has to offer, the more attractive it will be to industrial firms and vice versa."

Debra Eckes says that in Green Bay, Wisconsin, data on the economic outlook for the area and individual firms has been used to (1) identify local suppliers who can cost-competitively meet the resource needs of other local firms; (2) determine the kinds of firms the community needs to attract to meet substantial local resource needs; (3) encourage "reverse investment by Japanese companies in local food processing ventures; (4) establish a foreign trade zone; and (5) create a local venture capital group to assist in both new firm creation and existing small firm expansion. The Green Bay experience suggests the many uses of data regarding firm and community economic outlook. One important benefit of basing development plans on such data, moreover, is that plans to expand existing firms or to recruit new firms are made in ways compatible with the interests of local firms.

## Local Economic Strategic Planning

Strategic planning requires a careful review of the local environment, the development of alternative strategies, and the evaluation and selection of the strategy most appropriate to local resources and preferences. Using

the data collected in the business visits, the R & E task force develops and assesses ideas for local action. Some of the ideas they generate, of course, concern very specific actions or short-term projects. Other task force recommendations, however, are made with regard to longer term strategies.

For example, in Champaign County, Ohio, the R & E task force recommended that a permanent economic development council be established and that a half-time professional be hired to staff the council. According to Roland Patzer, Champaign County R & E coordinator, the achievement of this strategic recommendation came much faster than expected and wouldn't have been possible without the R & E planning process.

The visitation survey process not only generates new ideas for local development projects and strategies—it also may be used to collect data that are useful in seeking new or increased support from state and federal governments. Survey information regarding the transportation concerns of local firms, for example, was acquired by the Logan County, Ohio, program. "We've known all along about the need to widen the highway in the county," said Lee Dorsey, the executive director of the county's Chamber of Commerce. "We've been after the state for years to do something about it. But with this survey data, we've got some ammunition. . . . The state keeps telling us we have to show how [widening the highway] will spur development—well, this survey shows how many businesses need that road widened."

## Programs to Improve the Competitiveness of Local Firms

Any program that allows a firm to cut its costs of doing business puts the firm in a more competitive position in the national and international market. State programs that provide assistance with labor training, labor/management relations, marketing, management, and other information all may contribute to the firm's competitive position. Financing subsidies and tax exemptions, on the other hand, also provide a competitive edge to firms, but do not help them develop the human capital and technological expertise needed to realize permanent gains in competitiveness.

In one county, specific survey information was used to create a new program, using public sector resources to prevent a firm relocation. A firm in Washington County, Ohio, needed to add 40 jobs to its work force, but had to reject nearly 800 applicants because they could not pass the firm's mathematics tests. Emerson Shimp, the R & E coordinator, developed a response team that met with administrators from the chemical plants and educational administrators in the region. As a result, a chemical workers training program was developed to meet the needs of local employers. This program enabled local chemical firms to hire local people rather than recruiting employees from outside the area.

Howard Wise, manager of the Office of Industrial Development at the Ohio Department of Development, one of the co-sponsors of the Ohio R & E program,



points out that personal contact is often essential in helping firms use the best state and federal programs. "The volunteer R & E visitation teams give our state staff a tremendous multiplier effect. This allows my staff to focus its attention on the most critical R & E problems where the state can get the greatest bang for the buck. There is no question that communities with R & E programs can tap into state programs better than those without."

Sometimes programs already exist to support firm retention and expansion. However, survey information may enable local leaders to ensure that these resources are directed to better meet the level of local need for them. Tim Ashmore, industrial relations director for the Columbus (Georgia) Chamber of Commerce, describes how the chamber has for some years operated a variety of committees concerning such matters as employer-employee relations, management training, marketing workshops, and the like. What the visitation process allowed the chamber to do, he explained, was refer information regarding a firm's need for various kinds of services to the relevant committees. Chamber members, who volunteer to serve on these committees, then would contact the firm and explain the nature and values of the services available.

Thus, those benefiting include not only the firms demanding the services but also the organizations whose goal it is to market and deliver such services. Chambers of commerce, state agencies, local community colleges, and a wide variety of other service providers benefit by an increase in demand for, use of, and therefore appreciation for their services. One state department of development official confidentially remarked that local R & E programs "greatly improve our effectiveness . . . because they make people more aware of what we're able to offer them."

## Developing Informal Communication Networks

As suggested earlier, local R & E task forces bring together leaders from a variety of local development-related organizations. As they come to recognize more fully their shared interests and goals, it appears that greater mutual respect and friendship also may develop. Observation of one task force's interaction indicates that new channels of communication develop.

Prior to the R & E program, representatives of many local development-related organizations interact through more formal channels, via such means as public statements, written memoranda, and sometimes even litigation. Membership in the task force, however, appears to make it more difficult for those who have interacted in formal ways to continue to do so.

Most communities, of course, have networks. One problem is that in many localities the networks are limited to a fairly restricted membership and, often, do not include leaders from the wide range of development-related organizations that businesses need to be able to draw upon to meet their diverse needs. Through the R & E program, these networks are widened.

## Retention and Expansion of Jobs, Income, and Investment

Generally, economic development researchers will argue that one can prove anything with a few well-selected examples. They would claim that you need to examine growth rates and other impacts of an R & E program in communities with and without R & E visitation programs.

Only pilot efforts have been completed in such comparative research, suggesting very high benefit-cost ratios. Much more research is needed. As the number of communities using the R & E program increases, the feasibility of this comparative approach improves. Directors of state R & E training programs in several states have remarked about the frequent program design changes they have made, based on improvements suggested by local participants and their experiences. Action-oriented professionals should encourage such comparative research as a means of better demonstrating the "success" of their R & E programs.

Further qualitative research also is needed. Such research, which more open-endedly asks participants themselves to describe and explain the advantages and disadvantages of R & E as a local development strategy, may provide rich information with which to note the variety of tangible and intangible costs and benefits of the program.

*While the authors have had to rely more heavily on Ohio examples, due to budget constraints in contacting other states, it appears that a number of other states are starting R & E visitation programs. While the visitation programs are only a small part of the total retention and expansion program, they are a good place to start. The programs not only help local groups set priorities that meet the needs of existing firms and improve the attractiveness of the community to new firms, but also build the capacity of local groups to implement economic development. The growing number of states implementing such programs strongly suggests the increasing importance of this approach to local development.*

## Notes

1. Reference materials for organizing new R & E visitation programs are available for nominal fees from Ohio State University. Contact Ellen Hagey, R & E Program Consultant, Ohio Business Retention and Expansion Program, Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, The Ohio State University, 2120 Fyffe Road, Columbus, Ohio 43216.
2. Morse, George W., Kathryn Wilson, and Steven I. Gordon. *Local Industry Visitation Programs: Policy Research and Recommendations*. Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, The Ohio State University, March 1985, pp. 20-22.
3. Interviews completed by Robert McLaughlin in collaboration with George Morse.
4. David Birch, *The Job Generation Process*. MIT Program on Neighborhood and Regional Change, Cambridge, Mass. 1979.





## ASSIGNMENT 2: VIEWING THE VIDEOTAPE

You should have a copy of the videotape which you may wish to view with your Consultant. After viewing the tape, answer the following questions.

1. What specific reasons prompted communities to implement the BR&E visitation program?  
(Circle all that are true.)
  - A. wanted to solve unemployment problems
  - B. wanted to attract new firms
  - C. wanted to improve business climate
  - D. wanted to prevent businesses from relocating
  - E. wanted to increase tax revenues
2. What type of information is presented to volunteer visitors during the volunteer visitor training sessions? (Circle all that are true.)
  - A. economic orientation of the local area
  - B. advice about the interviews and questions
  - C. information about local firms
  - D. lectures about economic development theory
3. Why are industrial outlooks important? (Circle all that are true.)
  - A. they provide enough information so that volunteers need not conduct their visits
  - B. they help volunteers be more comfortable during the interviews
  - C. they help volunteers demonstrate the community's interest and concern for their well-being by informing the volunteers about particular establishments
4. Is confidentiality of the survey information important in this program?
  - A. yes
  - B. no
5. Briefly describe an example of how the program assisted a local business.

6. What were some of the benefits of the program for communities? (Circle all that are true.)

- A. the program demonstrates the community's pro-business attitude
- B. the program increases cooperation among local leaders
- C. the program enhances the community's ability to influence its economic development
- D. the program provides information that can be used for marketing the community to attract new firms
- E. the program identifies problems facing businesses which need to be addressed
- F. the program immediately created 60 jobs

7. List three questions you would like to ask based on the videotape.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



### ASSIGNMENT 3: READING

Read the article "The BR&E Partnership" on the following page and review the flow chart on Figure I-3. Then answer the following questions as either "true" or "false".

This assignment is particularly important because it illustrates the cooperation between the community and BR&E staff that must exist for a successful program. After you have answered the questions, distribute copies of the article and figure to your Task Force members so they better understand the structure of the program.

- \_\_\_\_\_ A. The BR&E staff works independently of the local community when implementing the BR&E program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ B. After the practice visits, it takes two months to prepare for the volunteer visitor training.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C. Following the volunteer visitor training, volunteers should wait two weeks before contacting their businesses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ D. The BR&E staff handles the follow-up work and the BR&E Consultant analyzes the survey data and writes the final report.
- \_\_\_\_\_ E. The Task Force members write the final recommendations.



## THE BR&E PARTNERSHIP

The BR&E Visitation Program requires a partnership among the BR&E staff, the BR&E Coordinators, the BR&E Consultant, and the BR&E Task Force members. Each stage of the program is sequential and dependent on each preceding stage. In other words, the completion of a stage by the local leaders generates the start of the next step by the BR&E staff which, in turn, generates the start of the next step by the local leaders. This chain of events is shown in the flow chart (Figure I-3).

After the Coordinators and Consultant complete their Certified Training assignments and send them to BR&E staff, the BR&E staff schedules a day during which a BR&E staff member, Coordinators, Consultant, and several Task Force members conduct two practice visits with local businesses. Afterwards, a Task Force meeting is held to discuss the program with the Task Force members.

After the Task Force meeting, the BR&E staff and Coordinators prepare for the volunteer training sessions. Preparation usually takes two to four weeks. Two training sessions are held during one day with one afternoon and one evening session. Each training session is two and one-half hours in length. Each volunteer attends only one session; two sessions are offered to accommodate different schedules of volunteers.

Immediately after the training, volunteers should contact their businesses to schedule visits. When the volunteers return their completed surveys to the Coordinator, the Coordinator reviews each one to identify those concerns needing immediate attention. If, for instance, a firm has mentioned that it will decide whether or not to relocate to another state during the next month, the Coordinators should contact that firm immediately and offer assistance. Or, if an establishment wants information about a particular labor training program, the Coordinators or Consultant should be able to provide a brochure or contact for the business. Less urgent and more complicated requests or concerns should be discussed among the Coordinators, Consultant, and Task Force members collectively. Having such an interdisciplinary group of local leaders address these problems improves the quality of follow-up work, thereby improving the credibility of the program among local businesses.

As the business visits are completed, the Coordinator sends copies of the surveys to the BR&E staff which codes and analyzes them. The staff writes the draft report about the program after all surveys are sent to BR&E staff. One copy of the rough draft of the final report is sent to the Coordinator who copies it and distributes it to the Task Force members. A BR&E staff member then reviews the report and discusses potential strategic actions with the Task Force. After review and discussion, the Task Force members write the strategic plan based on the report's findings. The strategic plan is presented during a community meeting or banquet and then implemented. From this description and the flow chart, it should be apparent that a BR&E program is a collaborative effort among the Coordinators, Consultant, Task Force members, and BR&E staff. The success of the program depends on each of these players fulfilling its responsibility.





#### ASSIGNMENT 4: INTERVIEWING A LOCAL BR&E COORDINATOR

Interview two local BR&E Coordinators by telephone or in person. Complete the forms on the following pages. A list of Coordinators with telephone numbers is provided. Also, be sure to ask the Coordinators about a "success story" which you will need for Assignment 5.

##### Arizona Programs

<u>Program</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Florence	Diana Reid	602/868-4731
Graham County	Dee Jaksich	602/428-2511
Greenlee County	Lynn Ruger	602/865-3122
Lake Havasu City	Annabelle Lewis	602/885-7812
Sierra Vista/Huachuca City	Carole Vaughn	602/456-9326
Sierra Vista/Huachuca City	Jeff Huff	602/458-5263
Willcox Area	Howard Bethel	602/384-2221
Willcox Area	Eddie Browning	602/384-2995
Yuma County	Don Soldweedel	602/783-3311

##### Montana Programs

<u>Program</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Anaconda Area	Barbara Andreozzi	406/563-8421
Great Falls	Mary Dunn	406/727-4643
Great Falls	Gordon McManus	406/453-1464

##### Utah Programs

<u>Program</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Delta	Vince Crawford	801/864-3818
Kanab	Julie Ingersoll	801/644-2551
Mt. Pleasant	Verne Fisher	801/896-5403
Wayne County	Mat Creamer	801/896-5403

##### Wyoming Programs

<u>Program</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Torrington	Milt Green	307/532-2436

## Ohio Programs

<u>Program 1986/1987</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Auglaize County	Earl Stienecker	419/394-4611
Champaign County	Mary Lee Gecowets	513/653-5764
	Roland Patzer	513/653-6511
Crawford County	Steve Prochaska	419/562-8731
Fayette County	Bill Grunkemeyer	614/335-3525
Kettering, City of	Don Foley	513/296-2409
Logan County	John Dete	513/465-4657
Meigs County	Ron Ash	614/992-6861
Ottawa County	Walter Wehenkel	419/734-4431
Perrysburg, City of	Tom Hopkins	419/352-6531
Union County	Oscar Decker	513/644-9242
Washington County	Emerson Shimp	614/373-6623
Xenia, City of	Gerald Mahan	513/372-9971

<u>Program 1987/1988</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Clermont County	Dennis Begue	513/831-0872
Darke County	Dennis Baker	513/548-5215
Defiance County	Michael Schultz	419/782-7946
Greene County	Phil Houston	513/376-5006
	Gerald Mahan	513/372-9971
Guernsey County	Renee Magee/Marianne Mrohaly	614/432-4882
Hardin County	Carolyn Gilbertsen	419/673-4131
Huron County	Amy Hookway	419/663-4232
Jefferson County	Terry Sterling	614/282-6226
Monroe County	Mike Lloyd	614/472-0810
Muskingum County	Edward Geiger	614/454-2501
Noble County	Mort Ake	614/732-2263
Perry County	John Ulmer	614/743-1602
Putnam County	Martin Kuhlman	419/523-5595
Williams County	Christine Dietsch	419/636-2255



<u>Program 1988/1989</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Carroll County	Mike Hogan	216/627-4310
Clinton County	Mary Alexander/Cynthia Hill	513/382-2737
Columbiana County	Gerald Schonhhut	216/424-9511
Coshocton County	Lonnie Leonard	614/622-1771
Erie County	Rob Marshall	419/625-6421
Gallia County	Paul Hayes	614/245-5353
Greenfield, City of	Vond Hall	513/981-7756
Hamilton, City of	Eric Middlebrook	513/844-1500
Henry County	Ron Kusina	419/592-4637
Jackson County	Karen Wyant	614/286-2722
Marion County	Larry Brown	614/382-2181
Scioto County	Gary Singleton	614/354-7879
Seneca County	David Fenstermaker	419/447-1313

<u>Program 1989/90</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Athens County	Robert Huff	614/594-2251
Fayette County	Bill Grunkemeyer	614/335-3525
Piqua, City of	Don Massa	513/778-8198
Sandusky County	Paul Oberst	419/332-1591
Vinton County	Bruce Knox	614/596-5263
Washington County	Emerson Shimp	614/373-6623
Wyandot County	Al Holdren	419/294-2371

<u>Program 1990/91</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
City of Brecksville, Cuyahoga County	Sue Oswick	216/526-1984
Logan County	Ken Keylor	513/592-4781
Mercer County	Larry Stelzer	419/586-4209
Morrow County	Bill Smith	419/946-6015
Noble County	Mort Ake	614/732-2263

**Program 1991/92**

City of Huber Heights, Montgomery  
County (Industrial/Retail)  
Lake County (Industrial/Retail)  
Medina County (Industrial)  
Morgan County (Industrial)  
Ottawa County (Tourism)  
Sandusky County (Retail/Tourism)

**Coordinator**

Bill Schroder  
David Gilmer  
Fred Huff  
Ed Buonopane  
Walter Wehenkel  
Bjorn "BJ" Wiberg

**Telephone**

513/236-7702  
216/357-2740  
216/722-9215  
614/962-3736  
419/734-6780  
419/332-1591

**Program 1992/93**

Ashtabula County (Tourism)  
Clinton County (Retail)  
Darke County (Retail)  
Englewood-Northmont,  
Montgomery County (Industrial/Retail)  
Erie County (Tourism)  
City of Euclid, Cuyahoga Cty (Industrial)  
Harrison County (Industrial/Retail)  
Lake County (Tourism)  
Lorain County (Tourism)  
Pike County (Industrial)  
Preble County (Industrial/Retail)  
Seneca County (Retail)  
Union County

**Coordinator**

Heather Toney  
Cynthia Hill  
Larry Prenger/Calena Cool  
Rick Carne  
Jackie Allen  
John Moldovan  
Jay Collins  
Michael Jamison  
Bob Ulas  
Patricia Cano  
Howard Thompson  
George Wadlington  
Don Worland  
Gerald Dackin

**Telephone**

216/576-4707  
513/382-2737  
513/448-6550  
513/496-7752  
513/832-3642  
419/625-6421  
216/731-9322  
614/294-9267  
1-800-368-5253  
1-800-334-1673  
614/947-7715  
513/456-5143  
419/447-0921  
513/644-9242

**Program 1993/94**

Adams County (Industrial/Retail/Tourism)  
Brown County (Industrial/Retail/Tourism)  
City of Cincinnati, Bond Hill (Retail)  
City of Cincinnati, College Hill (Retail)  
Crawford County (Industrial)  
Highland County (Industrial/Retail/Tourism)  
Hocking County (Industrial)

**Coordinator**

Joyce McDowell  
Becky Cropper  
Pam Allen  
Thomas R. Haid  
Jerold R. Thomas  
Rose Fischer-Merkowitz  
Terry McGrath

**Telephone**

513/544-2339  
513/378-6716  
513/641-0804  
513/853-2006  
419/562-8731  
513/393-1918  
614/385-9639

### Programs In Progress

Ashland County (Industrial)	Robert Ingman	419/289-3750
City of Carthage (Industrial/Retail)	Joan Weingartner	513/352-1955
Clark County (Industrial)	Charlie Brouher	513/325-1586
Jackson/Vinton County (Industrial)	Mike Jacoby	614/286-2838
Licking County (Industrial/Retail/Tourism)	Marianne M. Huey	614/349-6900
Marion County (Industrial)	Edmond M. Loewe	614/382-2181
Ottawa County (Industrial)	Bill Hudson	419/898-3631
	Joe Faga	419/734-2131
Paulding County (Industrial)	Ed Emrich	419/399-4901
Pickaway County (Industrial/Retail)	Gwen Wolford	614/474-7534
Portage County (Industrial)	Sy Thompson	216/297-3470
Richland County (Industrial)	David Williamson	419/342-2426





**INTERVIEW #1 WITH A CERTIFIED BR&E COORDINATOR**

Name of BR&E Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Name of BR&E program \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator's professional title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many businesses were visited in your program?
2. How many trained volunteers participated?
3. What were the primary benefits of your BR&E program?
4. How did businesses react to the visits?
5. How well did the BR&E visitation program demonstrate the community's pro-business attitude and its appreciation for the businesses' contribution to its economy? (circle one)
  - A. EXTREMELY WELL
  - B. WELL
  - C. FAIRLY WELL
  - D. SOMEWHAT
  - E. NOT AT ALL
6. How useful was the final report to your development efforts? (circle one)
  - A. EXTREMELY USEFUL
  - B. VERY USEFUL
  - C. USEFUL
  - D. SOMEWHAT USEFUL
  - E. NOT USEFUL

7. Was your program able to help any businesses solve local problems?
- A. NO
  - B. YES (please cite an example)
8. Did your program help any businesses use state development programs?
- A. NO
  - B. YES (please cite an example)
9. How much flexibility is there in the program?
10. What were the primary problems with the program?
11. What advice would you offer to a Coordinator starting a program?



12. List three of your own questions and the responses below.

A. Question

---

---

Response

---

---

---

B. Question

---

---

Response

---

---

---

C. Question

---

---

Response

---

---

---

Be sure to ask the Coordinator about a success story that you can use for Assignment 5. See Assignment 5 for details.



**INTERVIEW #2 WITH A CERTIFIED BR&E COORDINATOR**

Name of BR&E Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Name of BR&E program \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator's professional title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many businesses were visited in your program?
2. How many trained volunteers participated?
3. What were the primary benefits of your BR&E program?
4. How did businesses react to the visits?
5. How well did the BR&E visitation program demonstrate the community's pro-business attitude and its appreciation for the businesses' contribution to its economy? (circle one)
  - A. EXTREMELY WELL
  - B. WELL
  - C. FAIRLY WELL
  - D. SOMEWHAT
  - E. NOT AT ALL
6. How useful was the final report to your development efforts? (circle one)
  - A. EXTREMELY USEFUL
  - B. VERY USEFUL
  - C. USEFUL
  - D. SOMEWHAT USEFUL
  - E. NOT USEFUL



7. Was your program able to help any businesses solve local problems?
- A. NO  
B. YES (please cite an example)
8. Did your program help any businesses use state development programs?
- A. NO  
B. YES (please cite an example)
9. How much flexibility is there in the program?
10. What were the primary problems with the program?
11. What advice would you offer to a Coordinator starting a program?

12. List three of your own questions and the responses below.

A. Question

---

---

Response

---

---

---

B. Question

---

---

Response

---

---

---

C. Question

---

---

Response

---

---

---

Be sure to ask the Coordinator about a success story that you can use for Assignment 5. See Assignment 5 for details.





### ASSIGNMENT 5: WRITING A SUCCESS STORY

"Success stories" are essential for selling the program to new communities and for maintaining credibility of the program locally. Based on interviews in Assignment 4, write a summary of a BR&E success story. The following form is designed as a guide for the summary.

The success stories can describe results, such as the solution of local problems, an actual business expansion, the retention of a business planning to relocate, or the establishment of new programs to provide development assistance to local businesses. The key question is: "What happened that would not have happened if the BR&E program had not been implemented?"

At the beginning of the interview, indicate to the Coordinator that you want examples of success stories in which you can reveal the name of the business and contact it if necessary.

Name of the BR&E program \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Name of business assisted by the BR&E program \_\_\_\_\_

Address and telephone number of business \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the problem for which the BR&E program provided assistance.

---

---

---

Explain the role the BR&E volunteer team played in helping the business.

---

---

---

List the dates during which the BR&E volunteer team provided assistance.

---

Explain the impact that the BR&E assistance had on the business. In other words, what happened that would not have happened without the BR&E program?

---

---

---

---

---

Indicate whether or not the BR&E assistance helped the business save jobs, increase its growth, or expand its output, facilities, or market?

A. SAVED JOBS

\_\_\_\_\_ number of jobs saved

B. INCREASED GROWTH (created jobs)

\_\_\_\_\_ extent of growth

C. EXPANDED BUSINESS (increased output, market share, or facilities)

\_\_\_\_\_ extent of expansion

Indicate whether or not the Coordinator is willing to allow you to contact the business directly.

- A. YES
- B. NO

If yes, ask the Coordinator to send a letter verifying his approval. If no, ask the Coordinator if he/she has another example where you could contact the business directly.

## ASSIGNMENT 6: CONDUCTING TWO PRACTICE VISITS

1. Use the U.S. Industrial Outlook to complete the one-page summary (a summary sheet for both the industrial and retail programs are provided) on the following page about the trends facing two local businesses you are going to visit.
2. Mail each of the two businesses that you intend to visit an advance or introductory letter and a copy of the survey. (See Section V for a sample letter.)
3. Contact the BR&E staff, BR&E Consultant, and businesses to determine the best time to schedule visits with these two businesses.
4. Conduct the visits and interviews. Frequently as many as six people will conduct the practice visits with you. These include yourself, the Consultant, County Extension Agent, BR&E staff, and a Task Force member or another local leader.
5. Send copies of these surveys to the BR&E staff.





## INDUSTRIAL OUTLOOK SUMMARY SHEET

Firm ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Coordinator fills in)

To familiarize yourself with the establishments you will be visiting, please read the short industrial outlook summaries in your visitor packet. After reading, please answer the questions below. Hand in this sheet with your completed surveys. This information is needed for the data analysis.

1. What is the expected growth rate of this establishment now and during the next five years?  
(For your own information, compare your answer to the firm's from the survey).  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ currently                      \_\_\_\_\_ during next five years
  
2. Circle up to five factors that are likely to influence the firm's profits/output during the next five years. (For your own information, compare your answers to those the firm gives to the survey).
  - a. new products
  - b. changing consumer tastes
  - c. demographics
  - d. higher consumer incomes
  - e. defense spending
  - f. foreign competition
  - g. domestic competition
  - h. raw material shortages
  - i. energy costs
  - j. transportation costs
  - k. wage rates
  - l. raw material costs
  - m. new technology making older plants/equipment obsolete
  - n. financing availability
  - o. taxes or other government policies
  - p. other factors \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Based upon the information from the industrial summary you have read, what one or two questions would you ask the firm during the visit?

Firm name: \_\_\_\_\_

Industrial Sector: \_\_\_\_\_





## **ASSIGNMENT 7: MEETING WITH THE TASK FORCE**

Hold a BR&E Task Force meeting after the practice visits. Usually the meeting takes two and one-half hours. The Consultant, BR&E staff, Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator, and Task Force members should attend this meeting. During the meeting these items will be discussed:

1. Introduction
  - A. History of the program
  - B. Endorsements received
  - C. Objectives of program
  - D. Introduction of Consultant
  - E. Introduction of Task Force members
  - F. Introduction of BR&E staff
2. Videotape about the BR&E program
3. Role of the BR&E Task Force
  - A. Follow-up
  - B. Write recommendations
4. Practice Visits
5. Volunteer Training Sessions
  - A. Nominate volunteers
  - B. Set a date, time, and place
6. Local Questions

The Coordinator and Consultant will discuss items 1, 4, and 6. The BR&E staff will discuss items 2 and 3. The Coordinator, Consultant, and BR&E staff will lead the discussion for item 5.



## **ASSIGNMENT 8: DESIGNING A WORK PLAN**

After reviewing this handbook, meet with your BR&E Consultant to develop a tentative work plan for your program. The attached form is a guide for organizing the work plan. You may modify it if necessary.





## WORK PLAN

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

<u>Task</u>	<u>Person Responsible</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
-------------	---------------------------	-----------------

### **I. PREPARATION FOR PROGRAM**

Write a news release announcing  
the BR&E program

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Select firms to be visited

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Conduct two practice visits and  
interviews with the BR&E staff

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Select volunteers

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Complete the Certified Training

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Nominate volunteer visitors  
Request the volunteers' par-  
ticipation by mail

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Finalize a list of volunteers  
agreeing to participate

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## WORK PLAN

<u>Task</u>	<u>Person Responsible</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
-------------	---------------------------	-----------------

### II. TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS

Group volunteers in teams of two		
----------------------------------	--	--

Assign each team to interview four specific local businesses		
--	--	--

Schedule training sessions for volunteers (check schedules with Consultant and BR&E staff)		
--	--	--

Notify volunteers and Task Force of training sessions		
---	--	--

Mail letters and surveys to businesses describing the program and requesting participation		
--	--	--

Send information to BR&E staff		
--------------------------------	--	--

Hold two training sessions		
----------------------------	--	--

### III. CONDUCTING VISITS

Complete visits and interviews Write letters of appreciation to local businesses		
---	--	--

Reassign firms to volunteers willing to conduct visits		
--	--	--

## WORK PLAN

<u>Task</u>	<u>Person Responsible</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
<b>IV. FOLLOWING-UP AFTER VISITS</b>		
Detach cover sheets and send copies of surveys to the BR&E staff	_____	_____
Follow-up on urgent problems or concerns from survey	_____	_____
Hold Task Force meeting to discuss problems and concerns mentioned in survey	_____	_____
Keep a record of all follow-up	_____	_____
Write a news release about visits and all success stories	_____	_____
<b>V. PREPARING THE FINAL REPORT</b>		
Review final report draft prepared by BR&E staff		_____
Hold Task Force meetings to review the rough draft, and write recommendations based on the final report's findings	_____	_____
Hold a community meeting to announce the program's results and recommendations	_____	_____







## Notes

### III. CERTIFIED TRAINING FOR BR&E CONSULTANTS

The Certified BR&E Consultant, like the Coordinators, must be knowledgeable about conducting the BR&E program. The Consultant's primary role is to link the local BR&E program to outside agencies and opportunities. For this reason, we strongly recommend that the BR&E Consultant be an experienced economic development professional. Typically, Consultants are employed by utility companies, regional planning agencies, county government, private consulting firms, or state development agencies.

#### The Consultant's Responsibilities

The Consultant's main responsibility is to assist the BR&E Coordinators in the following areas:

1. introducing the program to the community;
2. planning the business visitation program;
3. training the volunteer visitors in survey techniques used during the business visits;
4. helping the local Coordinators identify appropriate sources of state and federal assistance for specific problems or requests noted by local businesses;
5. helping to write recommendations based on the final report; and
6. helping the BR&E Task Force present its final results and recommendations at a banquet or community meeting.

The Consultant's most important role is helping the Coordinators identify appropriate sources of state and federal assistance as part of the follow-up work. Following-up on firms' requests and concerns is critical to the credibility of the program because if you simply gather information from establishments and then do not act on it, your effort is greatly weakened and largely ineffective.

The Consultant accompanies the Coordinators, the BR&E staff, and several members of the Task Force on practice visits with two local businesses. During the program, the Consultant visits (if he/she is a resident from another community) the community at least six times: to conduct practice visits; to help train volunteers; to work with the Task Force on follow-up and writing recommendations; and to attend the final community meeting or banquet. In some cases the Consultant may assist the Coordinators by phone as well.

#### Certified Training for a BR&E Consultant

The Consultant's Certified Training is a correspondence-field course that he/she completes in his/her own community. The Consultant's Certified Training requires about one day more than the local Coordinators' training. At the end of the training, the Certified Consultant will be familiar with:



1. the objectives, costs, and benefits of a BR&E program;
2. volunteer training;
3. the business visits and follow-up procedures;
4. the application of local businesses' economic outlooks to economic development;
5. the local and state resource people involved with economic development programs; and
6. the U.S. Industrial Outlook.

A Consultant must complete assignments 1 through 8 listed under "Certified Training for a BR&E Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator" in Section II, with one exception. In Assignment 4, the Consultant should interview one Certified Coordinator and one Certified Consultant rather than two Coordinators. To talk to a Consultant, ask a Coordinator for the telephone number of his/her Consultant.

In addition to these assignments, the Consultant must complete assignments 9 through 11. Upon completion, the participant will be recognized as a "Certified BR&E Consultant".

7. Read the factsheet, "The Role of the Certified BR&E Consultant". See Assignment 9.
8. Compile a listing of state and federal resource people for the Coordinators and Task Force. See Assignment 10.
9. Present the short workshop about the usefulness of the U.S. Industrial Outlook during one of the volunteer training sessions. See Assignment 11.

When you have completed Assignments 9 and 10 (and Assignments 1 through 5 under the Coordinators' training), send them to the BR&E staff. You will complete Assignments 6, 7, and 8 under the Coordinators' training and assignment 11 later in the program.

### ASSIGNMENT 9: READING

Read the article, "The Role of the Certified BR&E Consultant" on the next page. Afterward, answer the following questions with either "true" or "false".

- \_\_\_\_\_ A. The BR&E Consultant's most important role is helping the local Coordinators identify appropriate sources of state and federal assistance for specific problems or requests noted by local businesses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ B. The BR&E Consultant needs to visit the community at least six times during the project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ C. The dates of the trips to the community are decided jointly by the BR&E Consultant, the local Coordinators, and the BR&E staff.
- \_\_\_\_\_ D. Any person can become a Certified BR&E Consultant.



## THE ROLE OF THE BR&E CONSULTANT

Business retention and expansion (BR&E) is becoming more popular as a local economic development strategy. This recent popularity stems from two sources. First, there is a new awareness that 40 to 70 percent of all the changes in net growth in a community come from the existing businesses rather than from new ones moving into the community. Secondly, the earlier informal BR&E programs were only marginally effective, while the more recent highly-structured programs are much more successful.

A team of four professionals is essential for the development and implementation of a successful BR&E program. The team is composed of:

- A. the two local BR&E Coordinators;
- B. the BR&E Consultant; and
- C. the BR&E staff member.

The local BR&E Coordinators are the local leaders designated by the program's sponsor to run the BR&E program.

The BR&E Consultant is an economic development professional who provides a link between the local BR&E Coordinators and available state programs. The BR&E Consultant should have considerable experience in working with local economic development programs and businesses.

The BR&E staff computerize, analyze, and summarize the findings from the survey of local businesses. The staff also writes the reports about employment shifts and the economic outlook for local businesses.

### The Role of the BR&E Consultant

The BR&E Consultant provides assistance to the local project Coordinators in the following areas:

1. introducing the program to the community;
2. planning the business visitation program;
3. training the volunteer visitors in survey techniques used during the business visits;
4. helping the local Coordinators identify appropriate sources of state and federal assistance for specific problems or requests noted by local businesses;
5. helping to write recommendations based on the final report; and
6. helping the BR&E Task Force present its final results and recommendations at a banquet or community meeting.





## Questions and Answers About the BR&E Consultant's Role

1. What incentive is there for the BR&E Consultant to participate?

There are two incentives:

- A. the BR&E program offers the Consultant an opportunity to work with local leaders on an economic development program that has immediate pay-offs and very high odds of success; and
- B. the BR&E program and Consultant can receive a high level of positive media coverage. During the program at least five news releases should be written. Also, the Consultant's name appears on the title page of the final report and he/she can be one of the speakers at the community meeting.

(The guests invited to the community meeting should include all participating businesses, volunteer visitors, local and state public officials, representatives from the Department of Development, and others interested in the community's economic development.)

2. After the community decides to start the program, how many times must the BR&E Consultant visit the community?

The BR&E Consultant will visit the community at least six times during the program.

### First Meeting

The first meeting is held to conduct practice visits with businesses. The BR&E Consultant, accompanied by the Coordinators, the BR&E staff member, and a Task Force member, conducts two practice visits with two local businesses. These practice visits help local leaders prepare volunteers during the training sessions for their visits. Usually the Task Force members meet with the Coordinators and Consultant on the same day after the visits to discuss the interviews and program.

### Second Meeting

The second meeting is held to train volunteers. The BR&E staff, for the most part, runs the training sessions for volunteers. The Consultant is responsible for explaining the purpose and usefulness of summaries from the U.S. Industrial Outlook. Usually two sessions are offered during one day to keep the groups small and to accommodate the volunteers' schedules. Each session is about two and one-half hours.

### Third, Series of Meetings

The next series of meetings (described in detail in Section VII) are held to review the surveys, discuss follow-up assistance, and review information about the local employment profile and industrial outlook. With the Consultant's network, background, and work experience, he/she can address many of the nonlocal issues or requests identified during the visits. Once the Consultant suggests a solution to a problem, it is the Coordinators'

responsibility to apply the Consultant's advice. Although the Consultant often becomes actively involved in the program by carrying out his/her own follow-up, he/she is not obligated to do so and may maintain a purely advisory role.

#### Fourth Meeting

During this meeting the Task Force, Coordinators, and Consultant review the survey findings with the BR&E staff member, and go through a nominal group process to identify the key recommendations for the strategic plan.

#### Fifth, Series of Meetings

The Task Force, Coordinators, and Consultant meet one or more times to finalize the strategic plan and to plan the community meeting where this information is shared.

#### Sixth Meeting

The last meeting is held to announce the findings and recommendations from the program. During this meeting the Consultant may report some of the highlights from the program.

3. When are these trips to the community scheduled?

The dates of the trips are decided by the Consultant, BR&E staff, and Coordinators.

4. Which of the above trips are conducted solely by the Consultant? Which ones include the BR&E staff?

The meetings for reviewing surveys and advising on follow-up action are made by the Consultant only. The others include the BR&E staff.

5. Can anyone become a Certified BR&E Consultant?

No. The person must be an economic development professional.

6. Is the BR&E Consultant assigned to a community or does he/she select the community with which to work?

Neither. The sponsor/Coordinator selects the Consultant.

7. Who provides the certification?

The staff of the Business Retention and Expansion Program provides the certification.

## ASSIGNMENT 10: LISTING OF DEVELOPMENT CONTACTS

1. Review the questionnaires that volunteer visitors administer during their business visits. A copy of the surveys have been included in Section V. After reviewing them, complete the list of local/state key contacts for your program (outlined on the next page). "Key contacts" are people who can provide you with accurate information about the economic development programs listed on the next page. You will probably be contacting these people as the surveys are returned. The surveys will indicate the type of information businesses are requesting and the types of problems that one of these programs might be able to solve. Please add other programs to this list as you think necessary. You may want to use the Small Business Development Center manual from your local development department or other references to help you complete the list.
2. Provide copies of this list to the Coordinators and Task Force members for their use.





List of Local/State Economic Development Resource People

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Person</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Recruiting Employees	_____	_____	_____
Technological Innovations	_____	_____	_____
Labor Training	_____	_____	_____
New State Regulations	_____	_____	_____
Financing Programs	_____	_____	_____
Labor/Management Relations	_____	_____	_____
Export/Foreign Markets	_____	_____	_____
Marketing Strategies	_____	_____	_____
Management Seminars	_____	_____	_____
Relocation Plans	_____	_____	_____
Enterprise Zones	_____	_____	_____
Tax Abatement	_____	_____	_____



## **ASSIGNMENT 11: PRESENTING A WORKSHOP**

The objective of the workshop about the U.S. Industrial Outlook is to help prepare volunteers for their interviews. Specifically, this information helps them feel more comfortable during the visit and enables them to ask follow-up questions about the economic trends facing the businesses they visit. To prepare for the presentation, complete the following tasks.

1. Review the introductory pages in the U.S. Industrial Outlook to familiarize yourself with the publication.
2. Review Assignment 6 (in the Coordinators' assignments). The form you completed for that assignment will be the same one used during the volunteer training sessions. A copy of the form is on the next page.
3. Read the short article "Reasons to Read the U.S. Industrial Outlook" in the U.S. Industrial Outlook.
4. During one of the volunteer visitor training session give your presentation about the utility of industrial outlooks. Be sure to explain the purpose of the U.S. Industrial Outlook and the reasons why it is important to read the summaries prior to the visits. Also, encourage each volunteer to complete these forms (like the one on the next page). These forms will be provided at the sessions.





### Review of the U.S. Industrial Outlook for Volunteer Training

Read the attached summary from the U.S. Industrial Outlook and be prepared to discuss the answers to the few questions below.

1. Is this establishment's industry growing, declining, or remaining constant?
2. Which of the following demand shifters are currently affecting or are likely to affect this firm's growth within the next five years?
  - a. general status of the economy
  - b. structural changes in the economy
  - c. growth in related industries
  - d. product substitution
  - e. price changes
  - f. demographic changes
  - g. foreign competition
  - h. other \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which of the following supply shifters are currently affecting or are likely to affect this firm's growth within the next five years?
  - a. relocation of suppliers
  - b. government policies (embargoes, tariffs, price supports, taxes, etc.)
  - c. environmental conditions (droughts, floods, etc.)
  - d. surpluses or stockpiles
  - e. production costs
  - h. other \_\_\_\_\_
4. What new technological innovations will this establishment likely adopt? How will these innovations affect its production and processing methods?
5. What new products will this establishment likely develop, and what new markets will it likely enter?



## REASONS TO READ THE U.S. INDUSTRIAL OUTLOOK

The U.S. Industrial Outlook is an essential reference for all economic development professionals. The economic forecasts for more than 350 manufacturing, retail and service industries are discussed in addition to the macro-economic forces affecting our and the world's economy.

The U.S. Industrial Outlook is used extensively in the BR&E program for several reasons. First, the information makes the volunteer visitors feel more comfortable during their interviews. Secondly, the visitor's familiarity with the firm may impress the firm representative being interviewed which improves the program's credibility and may encourage the representative to share more information. Thirdly, the information can be the basis for an early-warning system of plant relocations, closings, or contractions.

Typically, a team of two volunteers is assigned four firms to visit. Often, visitors are unfamiliar with the various industries of the firms with which they will visit. To help prepare them for their interviews, we recommend that each visitor read the summaries pertaining to the firms he/she will visit. The summaries, which are provided by the BR&E staff, are inserted in each visitor's packet of information. By reading a few pages about the current and predicted economic status of a particular industry, the volunteer develops an informed point-of-view or perspective. The volunteer will understand the firm representative's answers better than if he/she had no information about the industry. The volunteer will be able to ask more pertinent questions and pursue an answer more often than had he/she not read about the industry.

Sensing that the volunteer is somewhat familiar with his/her firm, the firm representative will have more respect not only for the visitation program but also for the volunteer himself/herself. Consequently, he/she is likely to share more information with the visitor. Since the information gathered during these visits is the basis for the final report and recommendations, eliciting as much information as possible from the firm representative is critical.

Besides improving the quality of visits, the information from the U.S. Industrial Outlook can help local leaders establish an early-warning system against plant relocations, closures, and contractions. Not surprisingly, firms planning to relocate, to close or to reduce their labor forces seldom announce their plans early. If the reasons for such a major change involve foreign competition, structural changes within the industry, government policies, or corporate strategies, the community may have little influence in the firms' decisions. The community can, however, minimize the damage of such changes by establishing an early-warning system. Since it is unlikely that firms will announce their relocation, closing, or contraction plans well in advance, local leaders must rely on secondary information, such as the U.S. Industrial Outlook. By reviewing the economic forecasts for their major industries, local leaders will discover which industries are facing a difficult period during the next five years and which ones are likely to prosper. In so doing, local leaders can act to minimize the potential damage (unemployment, lost tax revenue, decline of linked industries) or perhaps even avoid such damage.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

REPORT

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY

PLANT INDUSTRY



# Notes

## **IV. GETTING MEDIA COVERAGE**

While the information gathered during the visits is confidential (unless the firm gives its permission for disclosure or unless follow-up is necessary), publicity of the program is vitally important. There are at least six occasions during a BR&E program when the Coordinator or person in charge of publicity should write news releases. These occasions are:

1. applying for the program;
2. being accepted in the program;
3. training the volunteers;
4. visiting local businesses;
5. following-up on firms' concerns or problems (e.g. reporting success stories); and
6. presenting the final report (e.g. sharing the results and recommendations) to the community.

Sample news releases and copies of actual news articles printed about these occasions are provided on the following pages.

The first three occasions are excellent opportunities to obtain enthusiasm for the program because many of the local leaders acting as volunteers and local firms will read about the local effort. This media attention may motivate volunteers and firms to participate because it enhances the credibility of the program.

The fourth occasion, visiting local businesses, is another excellent opportunity for media coverage for two reasons. First, it proves that the program is action-oriented, that it is, in fact, a sincere attempt to improve the local business climate. Second, it provides tangible news for a reporter. The program is no longer an idea or proposal -- it is actually being implemented. By covering this stage in the program, a reporter can interview all parties involved, including firms, volunteers, the extension agent, Task Force members, Coordinators, and Consultant, for their feedback about the program.

Similarly, reporting on the follow-up work (item five) demonstrates the action orientation of the program. Follow-up work includes disseminating information, meeting with firm representatives to discuss solutions to a problem, referring to a firm an economic development professional who may be able to help it with its problem, establishing a seminar series about labor-management relations if that is the topic many firms mentioned as a concern, inviting speakers to discuss with local businesses issues, such as export marketing or federal taxes, that are reported during the visits, or notifying state officials of serious concerns, such as the cost of workers compensation, about which firms complained during the visits. All of these examples are considered follow-up. They should be reported by the media because such coverage proves that the community is committed to helping its firms.

Local media should also cover the final meeting during which the results from the program and especially the strategic plan written by the Task Force is presented to the community. Coverage before the event should be sought to generate more enthusiasm for it, and it should be sought afterward since only then will the results and recommendations be known.

Newspaper coverage is not the only source of publicity for a BR&E program. Radio interviews, television coverage, newsletters, and information bulletins are also excellent methods of informing the community and state about your community's pro-business attitude and efforts to promote economic development.





**NEWS RELEASE**  
**APPLYING FOR THE PROGRAM**

\_\_\_\_\_(sponsoring agency)\_\_\_\_\_ has applied for acceptance to a state economic development program, according to \_\_\_\_\_, president of \_\_\_\_\_(the sponsoring agency).

The program, the Business Retention and Expansion Program, is designed to stimulate economic development and growth by assisting existing establishments. The program is sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. The cost of the program is \$\_\_\_\_\_.

"Quote from the sponsoring agency or the Coordinator about the objectives or expectations of the program," said \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_. If the application is accepted, the program will begin in \_\_\_\_\_ according to \_\_\_\_\_. He/She expects to hear from BR&E staff in a few weeks.

According to \_\_\_\_\_, Director of the BR&E Program, a community must first identify its firms' needs, concerns, and problems before it can assist its existing firms. Under the BR&E program, local volunteers visit businesses and, with a questionnaire, gather this information. In turn this information is given to \_\_\_\_\_, the program's Coordinator. His/Her job, along with his/her consultant and task force, is to try to solve those problems or better meet those needs identified by the businesses.

"Quote about program's confidentiality," according to \_\_\_\_\_.

The information gathered from the visits is compiled and analyzed by BR&E staff.  
\_\_\_\_\_(coordinator)\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_(consultant)\_\_\_\_\_, and the task force members review this analysis and then write recommendations for future economic development initiatives for \_\_\_\_\_ County.

"Quote about the program's potential benefits," said \_\_\_\_\_.

Since 1986, (as of October 1993) 80 Ohio communities have participated in this state program.



# County applies for inclusion in state's business program

By BRUCE MEYER

Inquirer Staff Writer

**BUCYRUS** — After a busy two days, an application with county-wide support has been completed and sent to The Ohio State University to have Crawford County considered for inclusion in the Ohio Business Retention and Expansion Program.

The program — sponsored by the Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, the Ohio Department of Development and Ohio State — focuses on keeping existing businesses in the area and encouraging them to expand if possible. Its premise is that the majority of new jobs are created from the expansion of existing, successful business, rather than the attraction of large industries.

Steve Prochaska, the county extension agent, said he was overwhelmed by the strong support shown throughout the county on such short notice. The entire application packet was completed Wednesday and Thursday, following a meeting Tuesday night in which Prochaska explained the program to several development groups in the county.

The extension agent, who would serve as coordinator if the application is approved, said the whole process had to be completed in a hurry because he did not learn about the program until last week and the application had to be at OSU by today.

Included in the application were letters of endorsement from the Crawford County commissioners, Galion City Manager Ray Harbaugh, Bucyrus Mayor Paul Outhwaite, Crestline Mayor Henry Peresie, New Washington Mayor Tom Niedermier, Bucyrus City Council President Doug Wilson, the Galion Community Improvement Corporation, the Bucyrus and Crawford County CIC, the Uptowne Galion Associates, the Galion Area Betterment Commission, and the chambers of commerce from Galion, Bucyrus and Crestline.

"It was a tremendous outpouring of support. I was just amazed," said Prochaska.

The application also included names of community leaders to serve on a task force to oversee the program and 36 people who will visit

the 108 eligible businesses in the county. Eligible firms include the county's 91 manufacturing businesses along with 17 other firms that employ 50 or more people.

Prochaska was named as coordinator and Paul Clapsaddle would serve as the certified consultant. Clapsaddle, who was present at Tuesday's meeting, is an economic development consultant for Columbia Gas and previously guided the R&E program in Champaign County.

Tentatively set to serve as deputy coordinators are Galion Area Chamber of Commerce Director Dan Ritchey and Gene Gosch, who is director of Bucyrus' chamber.

It had been decided Tuesday that the Crawford County CIC would serve as the sponsoring organization, but the Galion and Crestline CICs have been asked to be co-sponsors.

Prochaska said the county will hear by Dec. 1 if it has been granted one of the 16 available spots in the program.

Should approval be given, the first step would be for Prochaska to un-

dergo two weeks of training. George Morse, R&E coordinator of OSU, would then come to the county and review the task force and visitors list with Prochaska.

At that point, the visitors would go through training. If everything goes as planned, they would start visiting firms in late February or March. They would interview the business owners, collect data and look for any potential trouble spots.

The data would be sent to Ohio State, where it would be evaluated and a number of recommendations would be made. A follow-up program would be used to implement any suggestions.

Prochaska said the long-term goal of the program is to keep existing firms in the area and "hopefully create a very positive climate to attract new business and industry to our area."

He also sees one other benefit that may be a bit more intangible.

"I think it's going to create a nice spirit of cooperation throughout the county with all the towns and villages working together," he said.





**NEWS RELEASE**  
**BEING ACCEPTED INTO THE PROGRAM**

\_\_\_\_\_ County will be implementing a local economic development program early next year according to \_\_\_\_\_, the program's local Coordinator.

The county's application for the program was accepted by the local Cooperative Extension Service, which sponsors the state economic development program.

"Insert a quote from the sponsoring agency about its enthusiasm for the program or the potential benefits, such as creating jobs, keeping firms, and improving the business climate," said \_\_\_\_\_, president of \_\_\_\_\_ which is sponsoring the program locally and paying the \$500 fee.

The main objective of the BR&E program is to assist existing businesses within the county to become more competitive, according to Ohio State University Extension Economist, Leroy Hushak. According to Hushak, helping firms become more competitive increases the chances of those firms staying and expanding in the community, hence the name of the program.

Hushak said that the focus of the program is on assisting existing businesses rather than attracting new ones because existing businesses account for about 70 percent of all new jobs.

To assist existing businesses, \_\_\_\_\_ volunteers, who will be selectively recruited and briefed about the program during volunteer visitor training, will visit about \_\_\_\_\_ local manufacturing, retail and/or tourism businesses in (months) to gather information. The volunteers will use a questionnaire to identify, among other items, the businesses' needs, criticisms, and concerns about the county. This information is reviewed by the local Coordinators, Consultant, and Task Force who will try to solve these problems.

"Need a quote from the Coordinator emphasizing the confidentiality of this information during the visits," said \_\_\_\_\_.

Assisting \_\_\_\_\_ with the program are \_\_\_\_\_, who will act as the Consultant and \_\_\_\_\_ Task Force members. These members include (list the Task Force members).

"Need another quote from Coordinator describing the cooperative nature of the program or his expectations", said \_\_\_\_\_.

Besides (your community), 73 other communities have participated in this BR&E program since the spring of 1986 when the program, in its current form, began.

1.  $\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$

$$\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$$

$$\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$$

$$\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$$

$$\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$$

$$\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$$

$$\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$$

$$\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$$

$$\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$$

$$\text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n = n$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n &= n \\ \text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n &= n \\ \text{dim } \mathbb{R}^n &= n \end{aligned}$$

---

## *New R&E Program*

5-2391  
Mercer County has been accepted as a participant in a special business retention and expansion (R&E) program jointly conducted by the Ohio State University Cooperative Extension Service and Ohio Department of Development.

According to County Economic Development Director Larry Stelzer, a team of local volunteers from both private and public sectors will visit selected business owners and manufacturing firms to "explore their concerns and suggestions for improving the community and the business environment."

The process should "give us a picture of the wants, needs and perceptions of businesses in Mercer County," he said, after which "we can direct our resources more effectively toward solving problems before they become reasons for business relocations."

Ultimately, the program should create jobs and strengthen the local tax base, Stelzer said.

Stelzer will coordinate the R&E committee, with local Realtor Jim Dabbelt as assistant coordinator.

Committee members include Celina Development Director Gary Bidlack; Roy Schnell, Fort Recovery; Eda Miller, Mendon; Al Homan, St. Henry; Ray Kremer, Coldwater; County Commissioner Jerry Laffin; Extension Agent Joe Beiler; Mike Niekamp, St. Henry; Rockford Mayor Gene Steiner; and Mike Broering, Maria Stein.

Besides Mercer County, 46 Ohio communities have participated in the program since its initiation in 1986.

---





**NEWS RELEASE**  
**TRAINING VOLUNTEERS**

An University Extension Economist (name) held two training sessions last night at the (place) for participants in an economic development program which begins this week.

The program is sponsored by (organizations).

According to (name), Coordinator for the program, (number) "volunteer visitors" attended two-and-one-half-hour training sessions to become familiar with the Business Retention and Expansion Program.

"Quote from the Coordinator emphasizing the importance of the volunteer visitors to the program,"                      said.

The program is designed to stimulate economic development by assisting existing establishments, according to                     .                      pointed out that to assist firms, a community must first identify firms' needs and problems and then address those concerns to improve the local business climate.

The volunteer visitors will be visiting        local firms between now and                     . During each visit, the volunteers, in teams of two, will use a questionnaire to gather information about each business. The two training sessions last night were held to help prepare the volunteer visitors for their interviews.

"Quote from a volunteer about what he/she learned from the training sessions or his/her opinion of the program after the training or about his/her participation in the project," said                     , one of the volunteer visitors.

During the training, volunteers viewed a videotape documentary about the BR&E Program. They also reviewed the questionnaire and the U.S. Industrial Outlook summaries pertaining to the businesses they will be visiting.

      (coordinator)       emphasized that the information gathered through the surveys will be strictly confidential. The information will be reviewed by                     (coordinator),       (consultant), and        task force members, all of whom will address the problems, concerns, and needs mentioned by the businesses with the intention of improving the local business climate.

"Quote from coordinator about the his/her expectations of the program or the results and recommendations at the end,"                      said.



# Volunteers Poised For Industry Survey

8-24



## Task Force. . .

Members of Mercer County's business retention and expansion task force are pictured at Wednesday's training session. Left to right, front, are Phyllis Hender-son, Joe Beiler and Eda Miller; rear, Jennifer Gehle, County Economic Development Director Larry Stelzer, Cooperative Extension Specialist Jim Skeels, and Ralph Swartz.

By CAROL CARSTENS

"I sense as an outsider a very positive attitude in Mercer County toward business," Ohio State University (OSU) Cooperative Extension Specialist Jim Skeels said Wednesday at a local Community Improvement Corp. training session for volunteers for a business retention and expansion (R&E) program.

Some 35 persons completed the two-hour survey workshop co-sponsored by the OSU Cooperative Extension Service and Ohio Department of Development. Next will come August visits by survey teams to 67 local manufacturing firms to gather information about their needs and opinions of Mercer County as a place to do business.

Although extension service programs may be aimed at different business sectors, Skeels said he "encouraged counties to do a survey of manufacturers first because (they) usually employ more people" and "the turnover of dollars from the export business" is an important component of a county's economic base.

The R&E program's goals are multifaceted, Skeels said. "We hope to create a pro-business attitude, attract new businesses to the area, assist existing businesses, and help solve local problems." The first step toward reaching those goals is the survey, he said, which subsequently will be analyzed by OSU personnel, who will file their report with the R&E task force.

Included in Wednesday's survey training session was information on the structure of the local economy and industry sector profiles published by the U.S. Department of Commerce. "People in industry really appreciate the volunteers who come out to ask their opinions," Skeels said, adding that survey teams likely will be more effective "pro-business ambassadors" with increased understanding of a company's economic profile.

He said the program's 28-question survey, mailed to participating businesses this week, is designed to give the R&E task force and the Ohio Department of Development information needed to identify immediate local problems, and introduce firms to state subsidy programs, new technologies and markets. The credibility of the task force, he added, will depend in large part on its ability to follow up quickly on whatever concerns are expressed in the survey.

Volunteers were warned "not to promise things we can't follow up on" and to assure interviewees that "confidentiality will be protected."





**NEWS RELEASE**  
**VISITING LOCAL BUSINESSES**

Beginning this week, \_\_\_\_\_ businesses will be given the opportunity to voice their opinions about the local economy and local and state government as \_\_\_\_\_ (sponsor) starts an economic development program.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Business Retention and Expansion Program officially begins this week as trained volunteers meet with local firms to identify their needs and concerns, ask their opinions about local and state government, and determine in what ways the local business climate can be improved.

"Quote by coordinator about the importance of the interviews, the cooperative nature of the program, the advantages of gathering primary data through person-to-person interviews, or the impossibility of such a program without these volunteers," \_\_\_\_\_, coordinator of the program said.

The \_\_\_\_\_ (local sponsor) \_\_\_\_\_ is the local sponsor, while Cooperative Extension Service is the state sponsor.

"Quote from the coordinator about the purpose of the interviews, or the importance of establishments cooperating to make the program successful," \_\_\_\_\_ said.

Since 1986, 73 communities in Ohio have participated in this program developed at OSU.

1. The first part of the paper is a review of the literature on the effects of the 1997 Asian financial crisis on the economies of the Asian countries. It is found that the crisis had a significant negative impact on the economies of the Asian countries, particularly on the economies of the newly industrialized countries (NICs). The second part of the paper is a review of the literature on the effects of the 1997 Asian financial crisis on the economies of the Asian countries. It is found that the crisis had a significant negative impact on the economies of the Asian countries, particularly on the economies of the newly industrialized countries (NICs).

## Industrial leaders can now speak up!

Beginning this month, area industrial leaders will be given an opportunity to voice their concerns as part of a comprehensive business retention and expansion effort undertaken by the City of Perrysburg, City of Rossford and Perrysburg Township, Mr. Anthony Summers announced.

"Much of the economic well-being of our city depends on the growth of our existing businesses," Mr. Summers said. "Because of its importance to our community, positive steps are being taken to identify and meet the needs of these firms."

In-depth surveys of area firms will be conducted under the sponsorship of the communities in cooperation with the Ohio State University.

Mr. Summers, co-ordinator of the Business Retention and Expansion Program, said that 20 local business people have been recruited to conduct interviews with the 60 manufacturing firms targeted for the study. The surveys will begin during the next 30 days. "We have a small team so it may take us a while to reach some firms."

The R and E program is funded by a grant from The Ohio Department of Development.

"Our survey has several objectives," Mr. Summers said. "We want to understand how local business people view our community's economy and how we can improve this area as a place to do business."

"A major focus of the program is helping local firms use state and federal programs that might give them a competitive edge and thus lead to further local growth."

"Also, we hope to establish a system that provides early warning of local business problems to prevent needless losses and to retain jobs and tax dollars."

"It is a fact that the majority of new jobs created in communities like ours comes from expansion of existing successful businesses."

"We want to work in partnership with area businesses to help solve their problems," Mr. Summers said. "The strength of our local economy is our common concern. I urge all business people contacted to take advantage of this opportunity to share their views."



# Kettering joins job retention program

By Kari Harrell  
Staff Writer

The City of Kettering has a strong employment base — the lowest unemployment rate among Ohio cities with

page 10

reports will be sent to all participating businesses, and the findings will be presented at a public meeting.

**ALTHOUGH LEMON** said local businesses have been surveyed in the past, he noted that this is the "first time it has been done so formally.

"We are visiting manufacturing firms and the major employers such as DESC and the hospital (Kettering Medical Center)," he said. "What we want to do is to let businesses know we're glad they're here and we're willing to help in any way we can."

Lemon said that Len Smith and Larry Morehead, both of the Ohio Technology Transfer Organization which operates out of Sinclair Community College, are serving as consultants to the program.

"When we run into a technical question from a business person, we can tell them that we'll go to these two people and get the answer," Lemon said. "The volunteers aren't out there just to compile the report, but also to set up lines of communication with the business community.

"Studies have shown that most jobs are coming from existing businesses. We want to make sure Kettering's businesses remain strong and we want them to know we're glad they're here."

populations of 50,000 or more — and the desire to keep it this way.

In an effort to retain and build up business in Kettering, the city is participating in the Ohio Business Retention and Expansion program.

Co-sponsored by the Kettering Chamber of Commerce and the Kettering Community Improvement Corp., the program is offered by the Ohio State University/Ohio Cooperative Extension Service.

**TOM LEMON**, program coordinator and city planner, said Kettering had to apply to the OSU/Ohio Cooperative Extension Service for acceptance into the program. He said Kettering is one of only 14 cities and counties statewide to

be selected for participation.

Although administered by the state, local volunteers actually do all the leg work for the program. Lemon said 19 volunteer "visitors" are matched up in teams and each is assigned to four or five Kettering businesses.

**ON THEIR VISITS** to businesses, the volunteers ask the business managers and owners questions about such things as product offerings, where the products are sold, the number of employees, employee recruitment and future expansion plans.

The questionnaire, prepared by the state, includes three questions specific to Kettering, Lemon said.

When the volunteers complete their visits — which began on March 19 and are running through April 17 — the questionnaires will be sent to OSU, where a report of results and recommendations will be prepared.

**THE REPORT**, Lemon said, will be done "on an aggregate basis and will be very confidential. The state won't know which answers come from what businesses."

After the report is sent back to Kettering, a task force comprised of local government, business and service leaders will prepare a more detailed report of its findings. (Copies of the

(Please turn to Page 10)

**NEWS RELEASE  
FOLLOW-UP**

This news release is not fully developed because follow-up work or success stories can follow many different channels. A few leads are provided to give you ideas about an article.

The President of \_\_\_\_\_ (business) \_\_\_\_\_ announced today that he/she will not relocate his/her firm, but will expand here creating an estimated \_\_\_\_\_ jobs. (This might occur if the BR&E Program somehow convinces the firm to stay, perhaps by introducing it to financial programs, improving transportation facilities, rezoning land, finding available land for expansion, etc.)

The superintendent of the vocational school introduced at last night's \_\_\_\_\_ meeting a revised training curriculum to better meet the needs of local firms. (This might occur if businesses complain that they have difficulty employing adequately-trained workers.)

A traffic light will be installed at the intersection of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as the result of a local development effort, according to \_\_\_\_\_. (This might occur if a business complains that the intersection is hazardous for its truckers which increases its insurance premiums.)

A petition to Congressman \_\_\_\_\_ and Senator \_\_\_\_\_ was sent yesterday urging them to either review and revise State workers compensation laws or risk the strong possibility of losing firms in \_\_\_\_\_ County. (This might occur if many businesses complain about a certain state law or agency that adversely affects their operations, especially if similar laws in neighboring states are less severe.)

A local Development department official spoke at a seminar series about labor-management relations which began last night at \_\_\_\_\_ (place) \_\_\_\_\_. (This might occur if the Task Force, in response to a large number of firms wanting more information about labor-management relations or some other topic, forms a seminar series or breakfast forums featuring speakers from the state government, regional organizations, and the private sector.)





July 1, 1989

The Times-Reporter  
Saturday, July 1, 1989  
DOVER-NEW PHILADELPHIA, O.

B-10

# Program's efforts pay off

By BARB WALTON  
T-R Staff Correspondent

The fruits of the labors of the Retention & Expansion Program of Carroll County and the Village of Minerva were recognized Tuesday night when Don Wolf, vice president of manufacturing at Wingfoot Films Corp. of Carrollton, announced that his firm was moving ahead with a \$5.5 million expansion here.

The unanticipated announcement highlighted the R & E's industry appreciation dinner where firms and industries were recognized for their participation in the business retention and expansion program organized a little over a year ago in the county.

Located at 750 Garfield Ave. NW, Wingfoot Films is a fully-owned subsidiary of Goodyear at Akron. The company manufactures industrial polyethelene film.

"We had the choice of locating here or in Bowling Green, Ky., where our other plant site is," said Wolf. "While we were making up our minds, task force members came and visited frequently. The first thing they did was put us in touch with electric and railway facilities which was of utmost importance to us."

According to Wolf, the 14-million pound cast line will create about 25 jobs. Wingfoot Films currently employs about 100 in their 70,000-square-foot plant that includes the manufacture of stretch pallet wrap, shrink film and medical film. The new 15,000- to 18,000-square-foot additon is scheduled for late summer. Wolf also said the firm recently purchased a \$1.5 million dollar acquisition from Exxon Chemical Co., and a segment of that film business is already at the Carrollton plant, and they

## Dellroy

are in the process of installing equipment now.

"I have never seen this type of help that we were afforded here in this county," said Wolf. "And I think our investment shows our inclination to stay."

Four strategic recommendations for the R & E program, instituted in April 1988, were presented by Richard Walton, county commissioner, Dale Hileman, R & E consultant, Bob Jones, task force member, and Gary Hall, Carroll County Chamber of Commerce.

The strategies are as follows: improving firm competitiveness by sharing information on state and federal programs; enhancing the attractiveness of the community by improving the available labor force; bettering the quality of life in this county; and developing strategic planning for economic maintenance and growth in Carroll County and Minerva.

Also making presentations were Dr. George Morse, econo-

mist for the Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, Lori Sweeney, senior division specialist for the Ohio Department of Development and industrial representative for Carroll County, and Dr. Bobby Moser, director of the Ohio Cooperative Extension Service.

"You have grown 32 percent over the development you were in 1972, and over four times as fast on a percentage basis as the State of Ohio," said Morse in commending the county on its manufacturing growth level.

Paul Painter, owner of Statistical Process Control, and Joe Close of Norris Equipment and Fabricating, both of Carrollton, were recognized as new industries by Mike Hogan, county Extension agent and R & E coordinator.

"We're here to show our appreciation and salute you tonight," said Hogan noting the strength of the program is already being evidenced by the 30 participating industries.

"We are very excited about the future growth in the county," said Robert "Rock" Smith, vice president of the Carroll County Commissioners and referred to as a catalyst for the R & E program by Hogan. "This is just the beginning," Smith added.

The event was in the Atwood Lodge Resort.



WOLF



# Business

## State program helped village sell itself to joint venture

"If a community expects to attract new industry, they first have to take care of their present industry."

That's the lesson the Putnam County Community Improvement Corp. learned three years ago, according to Martin Kuhlman, when it started working with Leipsic officials on economic development of the rural village and its surrounding area.



Martin Kuhlman, director of the county CIC, said the group's first focus was to create jobs by bringing new industry to the area.

"But when we contacted prospec-

tive industries, they asked about such things as unemployment rates, absentee rates, and problems encountered by existing industries. We couldn't answer those questions, and they asked us, 'Why would we locate there if local industries are not willing to stay or expand?'"

Local leaders came up with an answer through a program initiated by the Ohio Cooperative Extension Service and the state Department of Development.

The Ohio Business Retention and Expansion Program involves training local volunteers to visit and survey local manufacturers. Local coordinators of the program provide information on state and federal economic development programs

and a local task force tries to solve problems mentioned during the visit.

As a result of the R&E program and what Mr. Kuhlman described as excellent cooperation among "everyone from the township to the state," Putnam County has attracted two new industries and helped 13 others stay or expand in the last two years.

The latest benefit of the program: The AZTEC Coating Co. last month announced it would locate a \$200 million steel galvanizing plant in Leipsic, 55 miles southwest of Toledo. The joint venture between USX Corp. and Kobe Steel Ltd., of Japan, will mean 100 new jobs.

Earlier, W.C. Wood Co., of Canada, built a plant in Ottawa to produce upright freezers. That plant employs 130 people.

The state has instituted the R&E program in 46 counties, including Auglaize, Crawford, Defiance, Erie, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Ottawa, Sandusky, Seneca, Williams, Wood, and Wyandot.

— NED BELL

April 15, 1990

# DAILY JEFFERSONIAN

THAT FOR THE DAY — "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." The Third Epistle of John 4.

CAMBRIDGE, OHIO 43725 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 1989

35¢ COPY

ESTABLISHED

## Panel seeks to bridge gap between industry and education

By WES WILSON  
Jeff News Staff

Representatives from area school districts and industry met Tuesday afternoon to hammer out a strategy that would aid both educational and industrial needs in the county.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Schools/Business Partnerships came up with three possible strategies that include career days, plant tours and a subcommittee to build a better relationship between industrialists and educators.

According to Earl Joy, director of the Guernsey County Department of Economic Development, these strategies are being examined by the Cambridge Area Chamber of Commerce and people in education.

Last month, the Ad Hoc Committee, part of the Guernsey County Business Retention and Expansion Program, decided to include more people from the field of education in their discussions.

The meetings were in response to several surveys conducted last year that addressed specifics about the county's public school system, vocational schools, adult education and higher education.

The goal of the group is not only to address problems, but to work together and address the needs of industry and school districts.

One of the strategies being considered would consist of introducing career days to seventh- and eighth-graders instead of juniors and seniors.

Career day, Joy said, would include not just duties of a particular occupation, but also the kind of skills and training necessary for the job.

"Industry needs to work more with those on the firing lines," he said.

To accomplish this, the committee suggests forming a subcommittee to investigate industrialists' needs and how schools could fulfill those needs.

This could be done, Joy said, through problem solving and creative thinking.

The third strategy would involve tours of area businesses. The tours would familiarize teachers, counselors and administrators with the jobs and skills that are necessary in those fields.



# Retention, expansion program nets results

What will a retention and expansion program do for Washington County? That was a question being asked at the start of the 1986 pilot program. Just another program talking about economic development but not doing, was a common fear.

The chamber sponsored the program through the Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, Economic Development Department, with visitations made by chamber representatives. Today, one year later, it has been determined that there were positive results. One of the most obvious is the cooperation between all economic development entities, be they government or private.

Here are two very positive results that came directly from the program:

## ■ Training for chemical workers.

During the retention and expansion survey of manufacturers, it was determined that there was a pressing need for trained chemical workers. The chemical plants were recruiting outside of the area to get trained workers while Washington County's unemployment figures remained above the national average.

Chamber of Commerce representatives immediately set up a meeting with the chemical industry to determine the extent of the problem. This was the beginning of many meetings with Washington Technical College, Washington County Career Center, Ohio Bureau of Employment Services and many other organizations to bring about a solution to this problem.

The solution was found! Both the career center and Washington Technical College soon will have programs in place to train and re-train workers for the chemical industry. Chemical plants will be able to hire trained workers from within the local area.

## ■ Management/marketing council.

One of the purposes of the retention and expansion survey of industrial plants was to identify problems they were experiencing as a result of doing business in the Marietta area.

The two problems mentioned by industries most often were lack of expertise of training in management and marketing. From that, the management and marketing council was formed.

The council was made up of representatives from Ohio University, Marietta College, The Business Resource Center, Parkersburg Community College, Washington Technical College, private advertising and marketing firms and the chamber of commerce. It developed a separate survey that was mailed to those industries involved in the original R and E survey. The council's survey will be used to hone in on the specific training problems needed in our area.

When those needs are determined, the educational facilities within the Mid-Ohio Valley and the chamber will be working to institute programs to meet those needs.



Retention and expansion efforts are like an iceberg: You can see only the tip. Many of the results of R and E will not be visible within the community for many years. Economic development is a slow process. It requires lots of work, day after day, with few quick results. The Marietta Area Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to the well being of the community at large and will continue to take the lead in the development of its economy.



Michael Neilson

## AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT PACT SIGNED

Guernsey County commissioners have approved a contract with G.R. Bandi & Associates Inc., Cincinnati, for a master plan that will prepare the Cambridge airport for further development. Commissioners have taken the step because a task force made a survey of industry and business and the results indicated improvement of the airport was a priority. Cost of the project is estimated at \$23,000. Pictured at the signing are, l to r, Earl Joy, director of Guernsey County economic development; Tom Laughman, commissioner; Jeremy Brockwell, commissioner; Tom Colson, past commissioner; Al Fethers, airport authority; Kenneth Larrick, commissioner; Dr. B.K. Jones, airport authority; and Leon VanDyke, airport authority.





## **NEWS RELEASE PRESENTING THE FINAL REPORT**

This news release is not fully developed either because the final meetings vary considerably in format and content. Two leads seems obvious: either start with the number of people attending or start with the most important or interesting finding or recommendation that is presented at the meeting. Sample leads are provided. the remainder of the news release should describe the results and recommendations of the program and quotes from the principal leaders as to the success of the program.

More than \_\_\_\_\_ people attended the \_\_\_\_\_ Business Retention and Expansion Meeting last night at the \_\_\_\_\_ (place) \_\_\_\_\_, according to \_\_\_\_\_, coordinator of the BR&E program and organizer of the event.

More than 80 percent of the local establishments consider \_\_\_\_\_ to be an excellent or good place to do business, according to the results of a recent survey.

Two out of every five firms in \_\_\_\_\_ want Route \_\_\_\_ to be widened, according to a recent survey.

Nearly 30 percent of the firms within the community are dissatisfied with medical care, according to a recent survey.



July 16, 1992

# THE MEDINA COUNTY Gazette



PARTLY SUNNY  
HIGH 80

ENTS

THURSDAY, JULY 16, 1992

MEDINA, OHIO

32 PAGES; 3 SEC

## Businesses give area good marks in survey

By DUSTIN S. KLEIN  
Staff Writer

Medina County is a good place to do business, according to results of a survey of area businesses released Wednesday by the county Economic Development Corp.

"All in all, we got a good report card but we want to build on it," said Fred Huff, executive vice president of the corporation.

The survey, which was more than a year in the making, targeted 101 county industries and asked them several questions concerning business information in the county.

Results of the survey, which were presented Wednesday to more than 180 state and local offi-

cials and business leaders at Rustic Hills Country Club, were expected to help prepare the county for the future, and to aid in retaining current businesses and attracting new ones, Huff said.

"Providing a good business workplace is essential to the community's economic well-being," he said. "This survey gives us an initial database which we have not had. It's a building block that will allow us to work closely with existing industries and have them interact with the community-at-large and educators in the community."

The 15-page survey was initiated by the economic development corporation and carried out by a

See **BUSINESSES**, page A3

## Businesses surveyed give county good marks

Continued from front page

30-member task force and 74 community volunteers, Huff said.

Results showed industries had a favorable view of the county. One major concern existed in the area of education. Respondents said they want to see more skilled workers being produced by the education system.

"There is a need for skilled workers," Huff said. "We want to build with the educators to make sure when students come out, they can compete in the job market today."

Huff stressed the competition is more fierce than it was years ago because the job market has expanded to a global one.

The survey produced four strategies for county businesses and recommendations toward achieving success in those areas.

The strategies are: improving the competitiveness of local firms in domestic and global markets; improving the attractiveness of the county labor force; enhancing the quality of life in the county, as a location factor for existing and new firms; and implementing a long-term strategic plan for continued economic growth and development.

Recommendations for success included using the economic development corporation as a coordinating agency that would sponsor seminars and establish joint committees, establishing a county-wide business/education partnership, increasing affordable housing within the county and cities by using federal community block grant programs, and continuing

the retention and expansion task force. The task force was created to implement the survey, Huff said.

The recommendation concerning affordable housing is targeted toward providing for workers in the firms, concluding to increase productivity of companies, workers need to be better provided for in terms of housing.

Huff said another encouraging sign provided by the survey was the finding county firms are heavily involved in the global marketplace.

Only 4 percent of the firms surveyed compete with other county firms. More than 50 percent of the businesses said they compete outside the United States.

Huff said he hopes the county

can take the information gained through the survey and apply it to improving the county's existing economic base and trying to make the area more attractive to potential future industry.

Businesses and industries account for a large part of the county's economy and a majority of funding for county school districts, Huff said.

"It's a big circle that goes from education to industry to the tax base," Huff said. "It's important to recognize how interrelated business and education are and apply that to retaining and improving the county's industries."

The survey was sponsored by the Ohio State University, the Cooperative Extension Office and the Ohio Department of Development.



August 29, 1992

# Survey profiles visitors

News Herald reports

PORT CLINTON — A survey of 1,234 tourists visiting the North Coast counties of Ottawa, Erie, Lorain and Sandusky found that most are families with good incomes.

The 1991 survey was conducted jointly by the four counties as part of the Lake Erie Great Escape program.

The sample — which included 252 responses from Ottawa County visitors — revealed the following details:

□ 61.4 percent come to the North Coast with their families and another 31.4 percent come with a group of friends.

□ 19 percent have annual incomes between \$30,000 and \$40,000; 17.2 percent earn \$40,000 to \$50,000; 12.5 percent earn \$20,000 to \$30,000; 11.3 percent earn \$60,000 to \$80,000 per year; and 10.5 percent earn \$50,000 to \$60,000.

□ 30.7 percent of the respondents spend \$300 to \$500 on their visits to the North Coast; 26.7 percent spend \$100 to \$300; and 22.8 percent spend \$500 to \$1,000.

□ 51.7 percent said they found goods and services competitively priced on the North Coast; 32.3 percent found prices "slightly expensive."

□ 56.5 percent of the visitors stayed in hotels or motels, with another 12.4 percent staying at bed & breakfasts or rental cottages; 16.6 percent stayed at campgrounds.

□ 46.2 percent of the respondents visited Cedar Point; 44.2 percent visited Put-in-Bay; 30.5 percent visited the Lake Erie Factory Outlet Mall; and 29.7 visited Kelleys Island.

□ 54.9 percent came from elsewhere in Ohio; 9.1 percent came from Michigan; and 8.8 percent came from Pennsylvania.

NH  
8/29/92

# CIC Plans Survey <sup>1-09-93</sup>Unveiling

Businesspersons and other participants in the Mercer County Community Improvement Corp.'s (CIC) retention and expansion survey still can make reservations for a Jan. 15 banquet at which survey results will be unveiled, County Development Director Larry Stelzer told organization trustees at their regular meeting Wednesday.

He noted that some 145 reservations already had been received, including commitments from U.S. Rep. John Boehner, R-West Chester, and State Rep. Jim Buchy, R-Greenville, as well as several Ohio Department of Development officials.

The county development office (586-4209) will accept RSVP calls for the banquet as late as Monday, Jan. 13, he said.

As an immediate result of the survey, Stelzer said, his office purchased a 900-page listing of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations

for every type of business. The OSHA resource material may be obtained by area businesses on a loan basis by contacting the office, he said.

The CIC's 1992 budget was approved unanimously after discussion and clarification of accounting procedures. Total budgeted amount was \$30,084.68, with \$14,791.16 of that total projected income from a 37.5-cent per capita collection.

Stelzer reported 32 outstanding loans totalling \$1.5 million under the county's revolving loan fund, and said "well over 300 jobs" were created by expansions spurred by the loans. "We have an outstanding success rate" on loan repayments, he added. "It's a heck of an opportunity for businesses."

CIC Chairman Al Boos reported mailing 43 invitations to participate in the May 8-9 Industrial Awareness Days to area industries and businesses. The last such local industrial promotion was held in 1986, he noted.

# Logan County Retention & Expansion Survey Giving Direction

Carol Onofreight-Burga  
Field Reporter

Services, business environment, community plan and "people" were named Logan County's "best features" by 52 Logan County residents in a recently completed business retention and expansion survey.

Studies show that 40% to 70% of the increase or decrease in local employment is due to businesses already in the community," commented Leiland Dorey, executive vice president of the Logan County Area Chamber of Commerce and the county's economic development director. "This survey helps us identify problems facing local businesses and propose some solutions."

The survey was conducted by the Logan County Business Retention and Expansion Task Force. It was co-sponsored by the chamber, the Ohio State University Cooperative Extension Service (OSU/ECES) and the Ohio Department of Development.

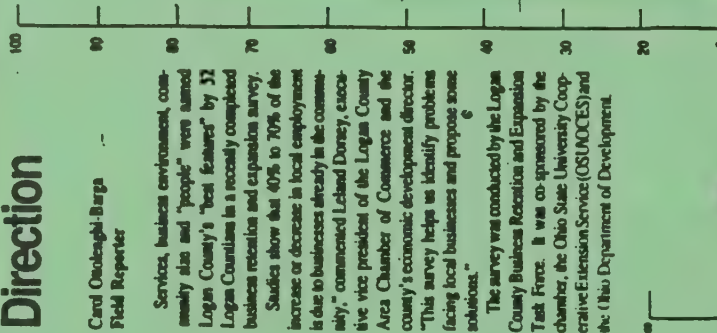


Figure 2 Location factors in Logan County, 1991 show percent of firms interviewed giving excellent or good rating.

According to the task force's final report, Logan County's manufacturing sector was targeted for analysis because it is the current dissatisfactions with the Logan County area. (See Figure 1)

Strategy One outlines five recommendations to improve the competitiveness of local firms by helping them use state and federal development programs. It suggests that the chamber develop a quarterly newsletter and act as a clearinghouse for information about labor-management relations, state regulations, and programs on

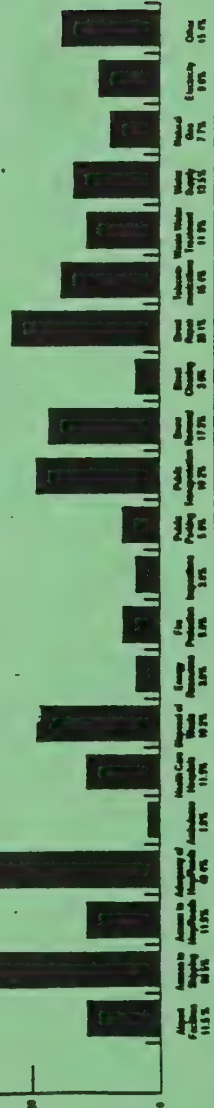


Figure 1 Percent of interviewed firms that reported dissatisfaction with current services or conditions.

the survey firms during interviews with the 52 firms selected. Results were tabulated by the cooperative extension service.

It took about an hour and a half to do each interview," said Dorey. "I depended on the industry, whether the visitor took a tour of the plant."

Dorey added, "This survey took a little more than a year from the time we started to the time we got the information back from OSU and developed the recommendations."

The task force recommendations are organized under four major strategies for economic development, which address the current dissatisfactions with the Logan County area. (See Figure 1)

Strategy One outlines five recommendations to improve the competitiveness of local firms by helping them use state and federal development programs. It suggests that the chamber develop a quarterly newsletter and act as a clearinghouse for information about labor-management relations, state regulations, and programs on

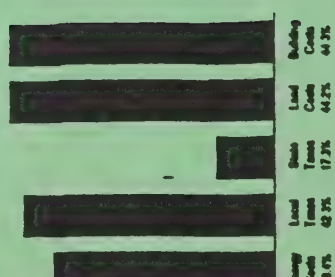


Figure 2 Location factors in Logan County, 1991 show percent of firms interviewed giving excellent or good rating.

The Task Force recommends conducting an area wage and benefit survey, arranging for local labor training programs to give seminars, and establishing a "Blue Ribbon Committee on Labor Recruiting and Training." Business and education partnerships should be developed, and local youth should be familiarized with area career opportunities and necessary skill and training levels, it advises.

An innovative feature of Strategy Two is the creation of a local network for the

continued on page 28



# Chamber survey says teamwork key to meeting business needs

By MARGARET FLYNN  
Staff writer

Get organized and work together.

That's the message to this community from a recent analysis of Sandusky County's retail and tourism industries.

The Ohio State University-Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, the National Coastal Resources Research & Development Institute and the Ohio Department of Development surveyed 64 sam-

ple businesses, which looked at the county's strengths and weaknesses.

A local task force created recommendations in response—and most solutions encourage businesses to work as a team to solve regional problems. The task force was comprised of chamber, business and development leaders.

"It's all of our responsibilities to become involved," said Bank

See SURVEY, A2

## Survey highlights

### SANDUSKY COUNTY STRENGTHS

- ☐ Hospitality to tourists
- ☐ Good attitude and of work force
- ☐ Access to higher education
- ☐ Recreational opportunities
- ☐ Positive business community
- ☐ General quality of life
- ☐ Good general local services

### SANDUSKY COUNTY WEAKNESSES

- ☐ More businesses needed to attract tourists
- ☐ Exterior atmosphere of area
- ☐ Lack of special events
- ☐ Narrow choices of places to eat
- ☐ Too much traffic
- ☐ Lack of public parks and beaches
- ☐ Public transportation
- ☐ Some services: snow/ice removal, air services and parking

TO RECORDS, FILMS, VIDEOS, TV AND BOOKS ... FRIDAY ENTERTAINMENT PAGE

Fremont News-Messenger Page 1



# Survey

## Continued From A1

One Fremont President Roger Mann. "We're absolutely going to fail if we go off in different directions."

"... We have a better chance of solving our problems than other areas, especially bigger cities — you all know each other. So go ahead and extend a hand."

Sandusky County's biggest strength is the quality of life here. Of the businesses surveyed, 84 percent said access to

higher education here is good or excellent. General quality of life, recreational opportunities and the business community also rated well.

But companies said they would like to see additional businesses here to attract more tourists, more places to eat and county beautification groups to make this area more competitive.

Suggested team efforts include joint marketing plans, "shop at home" campaigns and more special events to bring shoppers to the county.

"We're splitting the dollar many different ways," said B.J. Wiberg, President/CEO of the Sandusky County Chamber of Commerce. "We need to do more regional marketing to draw more people into the county."

Another concern is employee benefits. Of 64 businesses surveyed, 26 provide health plans to their full-time, permanent employees. Fourteen provide a retirement plan; 32 offer vacation leave, and 22 offer sick leave.

"It's no surprise to anyone that the costs of providing benefits are escalating at a dramatic rate," Barry Luse of Croghan Colonial Bank said. "... We believe Sandusky County is not an island in this regard."

The suggestion from the survey was that businesses work together in a benefits task force, which would identify group benefit programs to help smaller businesses save money on em-

## Typical business

According to the Chamber of Commerce survey, a typical business in retail or tourism:

- ☐ Employs less than 10 full-time employees
- ☐ Pays its full-time, permanent workers an average wage of \$5.80 per hour
- ☐ Is non-union
- ☐ Has the greatest trouble recruiting sales, technicians and management workers
- ☐ Is probably not considering expanding, renovating or relocating
- ☐ Has sought or applied for a business loan, probably from a commercial bank, to finance inventory or machinery and equipment
- ☐ Advertises regularly in the yellow pages or daily newspapers

ployee benefits.

As with the Sandusky County Leadership Class results, Wiberg said the bottom line is getting people involved.

"The judgment on how this program takes off from now on is based on how people respond," he said. "... I imagine in a few weeks we'll have a good feeling for how serious people are, and I hope they are serious. This is meaty stuff, and it is do-able stuff."

## Typical tourist

The Chamber of Commerce survey describes a typical tourist to the Lake Erie Great Escape (LEGE), which includes Sandusky, Ottawa, Lorain and Erie counties.

The LEGE tourist is married and has a family income of \$50,000. The family vacations together here — they are from Ohio and have been to this area before. In fact, they vacation here every year. The family will visit less than nine days and will spend \$695. They are somewhat spontaneous, having planned the trip less than two months in advance. They rely on recommendations from friends and previous experience when choosing where to spend their time.



# Notes



## **V. HOLDING PRACTICE VISITS AND TASK FORCE MEETINGS**

After the Coordinators and Consultant have completed their Certified Training, two practice visits and the first Task Force meeting are held. The purpose of the practice visits is to demonstrate to the Coordinators, Consultant, County Extension Agent, and Task Force members the procedure for a typical firm visit.

Although only two establishments are visited, this experience is extremely valuable because it enables these leaders to see for themselves firms' reactions to the program. They can see the extent to which local establishments support this type of local initiative, they can hear the degree to which firms are willing to share information, and they can learn the extent to which the community is meeting firms' needs. These observations should then be shared during the training sessions with the volunteer visitors who may be a bit nervous about interviewing firm managers and presidents, and who are very eager to hear encouraging, first-hand accounts of an actual visit.

The purpose of the Task Force meeting is to discuss the local program with the Task Force members, and most important, to explain their roles. Often, this is the first meeting of the members so it is important that all attend.

The suggestions below for organizing the practice visits and Task Force meeting are based on experiences from other programs similar to yours. Since these are only suggestions, you can, of course, alter them according to your local situation. Please contact us, however, if you want to make significant changes to these suggestions so we can discuss them thoroughly. (If you do need to alter the program for your local situation, we may be able to help you by sharing experiences from the other programs with which we have worked, and your ideas to alter the program will help us understand new approaches to different situations. Either way, please call us.)

### **A. Practice Visits**

These are the steps the Assistant Coordinator needs to follow to organize and hold the practice visits.

1. The people listed below will be participating in the practice visits. The Coordinator should call them to set possible dates for the visits:

1. BR&E staff member or volunteer trainer
2. the Coordinator
3. Assistant Coordinator
4. the Consultant
5. the Extension Agent
6. a key leader usually from the Task Force
7. another key leader usually from the Task Force



The first five visitors attend both practice visits; the other two visitors take turns. In other words, one key leader will attend the morning interview and the other key leader will attend the second interview. This allows two key leaders to have first-hand experience in the visitation process and keeps the number of visitors to six for each visit. Although we have held some visits with 10 people, we suggest that the number of visitors be held to five or six to prevent the firm from feeling invaded.

The "volunteer trainer" listed above is an experienced consultant or coordinator who has worked with another BR&E program in your area. Frequently we ask these people to work with new programs on the practice visits and first Task Force meeting because they have first-hand experience in the program and can offer you valuable insights.

2. The Assistant Coordinator should select two firms to visit. Since these firms are the first to be visited, he/she may wish to select two firms owned and operated by people with whom he/she is familiar and comfortable. We recommend that the two establishments be contrasts; that is, one that employs few people and one that employs many, or one that is labor-intensive and one that is capital-intensive, or one that is growing and one that is declining or stagnating. These contrasting establishments often provide very different answers during the visits because they face different economic problems. This allows the visitors to experience two potentially different interviews.

3. The Assistant Coordinator should call the two firms to schedule appointments. Both appointments must be made for the same day, one in the morning (before lunch) and one in the early afternoon (before the Task Force meeting). Usually, interviews last about one hour but some stretch to two hours, so you may wish to allow two hours for them.

While on the phone, the Assistant Coordinator should explain to the firm representative the purpose of the BR&E program, the purpose of the practice visits, and the possibility that five or six people may attend the interview. Also, the Assistant Coordinator should explain that although these two visits are practice visits, they are still "official visits", meaning that they are part of the program and that the survey information will be used in the analysis. The Assistant Coordinator must stress the confidentiality of the interview and tell the firms that a copy of the survey which will be used during the interview will be sent to them beforehand.

4. Once the Assistant Coordinator has scheduled the two interviews, he/she needs to send a letter to BR&E staff with the following information:
  1. the date and times of the interviews;
  2. the names and SIC codes of the two establishments; and
  3. the names of the people conducting both visits

This information is used to prepare packets for each visitor.

5. The Assistant Coordinator should send a copy of a survey to each firm several days before the practice visits. The Assistant Coordinator should also send a letter\* mentioning the purpose of the program, the confidentiality of the survey information, the importance of the firm's cooperation, and appreciation of the firm for agreeing to meet with the visitors. The Assistant Coordinator should also indicate in the letter those people who will be attending the interview. A copy of the survey and a sample letter are provided in this section.

\*We strongly recommend that the Assistant Coordinator develop a letterhead specifically for the BR&E Program. Using a BR&E letterhead lends credibility to your program and gives the impression that this is not just another survey program where the information gathered sits on a shelf. The letterhead suggests that this effort is both action-oriented and long-term. It is important that the members of the Task Force (including the Coordinators and Consultant) appear on the letterhead so that firms recognize the different organizations participating in this effort. Another reason to list the names and organizations of the Task Force members is to give public recognition to the contribution these individuals have made. Also, listing the names and organizations on the letterhead may improve response rates if an establishment representative recognizes one or several of the individuals. A sample letterhead is provided in this section.

6. As you will see, the interviews virtually run themselves. Nonetheless, during the first visit, the BR&E staff member or experienced consultant will run most of the interview. The Coordinator or Assistant Coordinator conduct the second visit. During the interviews they should:

1. explain the program's purpose briefly to the establishment representative;
2. mention the local and state sponsors;
3. have everyone introduce him/herself to the representative;
4. express appreciation to the representative for meeting with him/her;
5. emphasize the confidentiality of the program but also the need for follow-up work;
6. explain that all answers are voluntary and if he/she chooses, the representative does not have to answer specific questions he/she may object to; and
7. give the representative a copy of the survey should he/she not have one.

During the first interview, after the Assistant Coordinator's introduction, the BR&E staff member or volunteer trainer will read each question of the survey. During the second interview, the Coordinator, after giving the introduction, should read the questions of the survey.



7. As a rule, while one volunteer visitor asks the survey questions, the other records the answers. So, during the first interview, the Coordinator or Consultant can record the answers. During the second interview, the Assistant Coordinator or volunteer trainer can record the answers. In fact, everyone except the interviewer can record answers if they want just as long as one person is designated to do the official recording.
8. After each interview, the Assistant Coordinator should explain to the firm representative that he/she will be invited to a report presentation which will be held in about six months. During that presentation the results from the survey and the Task Force's recommendations for economic development will be announced. The Coordinators should also tell the firms that they will receive copies of the program executive summary during that event.
9. Following the interview, each firm representative should receive a "thank you" letter. A sample letter is provided in this section.

#### **Lunch: Time Between the Two Practice Visits**

The visitation team (the Coordinators, Consultant, Extension Agent, the two Task Force members/key leaders, and BR&E staff member or experienced consultant) will meet for lunch to discuss the program, the visit and share information.

#### **B. Task Force Training Meeting**

The Task Force training meeting is held after the two practice visits usually in the afternoon (3 or 4 pm). As mentioned earlier, the purpose of the Task Force meeting is to ensure that all members understand the purpose, objectives, structure, and timeframe of the BR&E program. Perhaps most important, the meeting is held to make sure the members understand their role in the program. A typical format for the Task Force meeting is as follows:

##### **1. Introduction**

The Coordinator introduces each person (or asks each person to introduce her-or himself). He/She should explain the objectives of a BR&E program, the sponsorship, and perhaps a historical note as to how many other communities have participated.

##### **2. Videotape**

The videotape about the BR&E program is presented so the Task Force becomes familiar with the program. An informal question-and-answer period will follow.

3. **Practice Visits**

The Coordinators, Consultant and others making the visits share with the Task Force their experiences and impressions from the firm visits earlier in that day.

4. **Task Force Responsibilities**

The BR&E staff or experienced consultant will explain the role of the Task Force. Its role consists of four responsibilities:

A. recruit additional volunteer visitors;

At this point in your program you will have most of your volunteer visitors recruited; however, often you still need a few more. If such is the case, the Task Force should be delegated the responsibility to recruit additional volunteers which is discussed in Section II.

B. determine the local questions;

Although the survey used during the interviews is standard, each community may include five local questions. These local questions should concern local development issues. For example, the widening of a major thoroughfare, the increasing of a sewage treatment plant's capacity, the effects of a tax abatement, the use of vocational schools, the utility of upgrading a regional airport, or the desirability of downtown development may be pertinent issues in your community about which the Task Force would like firms' opinions.

C. address local concerns and problems cited by firms in the surveys;

This is one of the Task Force's most important roles. When the surveys are returned to the Coordinator, certain complaints or concerns expressed by firms will be of a local nature, such as zoning regulations or street repair. It is the Task Force's job to discuss these issues and to try to solve them. Issues of a nonlocal nature will be addressed by the Consultant and simple concerns, such as a firm wanting more information about a certain topic like financing, will be handled by the Coordinators and Consultant.

In most cases, the Task Force meets on a regular basis as the surveys are returned, usually 10 or 12 surveys per meeting are reviewed and solutions to the problems and concerns noted and discussed. More discussion about following-up on the survey information is covered in Section VII.



D. write the strategic plan;

This is the other important role of the Task Force. After the visitors complete their interviews and you have sent copies of all the surveys to the BR&E staff, the BR&E staff will analyze the data and write a draft report. The draft report of the findings is sent to the Coordinator.

The Task Force, Coordinators, Consultant, and the BR&E staff person meet to review and discuss the findings. Based on the findings, the Task Force will write its strategic plan for future economic development efforts in the community. The process of reviewing the rough draft and writing the recommendations is discussed further in Section VIII.

5. Timeframe

The BR&E staff or volunteer trainer will review the timeframe with the Task Force so that each member realizes when each stage, such as the volunteer training and visits, will occur. This review is important because members can see the beginning and end of this effort.

6. Policy on Reassigning Firms

A few of your volunteers will not complete their visits for various reasons. To prevent your program from being delayed excessively, the Task Force should discuss and ratify its policy on reassigning firms.

SAMPLE LETTER  
ASKING FIRMS FOR PARTICIPATION

Chief Executive Officer  
Some Company  
Some Address  
Some City and State and Zip

Dear Chief Executive Officer:

The economic well-being of our community depends on the well-being of our existing business such as your firm. Realizing the importance of local establishments, the sponsoring agency is sponsoring and implementing an economic development plan to not only assist existing firms but also improve the local business climate.

The development plan, Business Retention and Expansion Program, is a county-wide effort bringing together several organizations concerned about local economic development. These organizations include list those organizations endorsing the program and those represented by the Coordinators, Consultant, and Task Force members, and the Cooperative Extension Service.

The program involves local leaders visiting businesses to identify the needs of our firms. To do so, these leaders are using surveys to gather information. Specifically, the objectives of using the survey are to:

1. understand our firms' viewpoint of the local economy;
2. understand our firms' relationship with the local economy;
3. identify your concerns related to economic development in this area;
4. provide our firms with information about current state development programs;  
and
5. establish or maintain a channel of communication between your firm and local leaders.

Enclosed please find the survey that the volunteers will be using during the interviews. The volunteers, their names will be contacting you this week to schedule an appointment with you. The interviews usually last about an hour. Let me emphasize that all information shared during the interviews is strictly confidential.

I would greatly appreciate your cooperation with this community effort. Please, if you have any questions regarding this program, call me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

BR&E Coordinator



**SAMPLE LETTERHEAD**

**SOME COUNTY'S BUSINESS  
RETENTION AND EXPANSION COMMITTEE**

123 Broad Street  
City, State Zip Code  
Phone Number

**Coordinator**

John Smith  
John's organization

**Assistant Coordinator**

Joe Smith  
Joe's organization

**BR&E Task Force**

Dick Jones  
County Commissioner

Ted Johnson  
Mayor of Village

Steve Brown  
County Extension Agent

(Continue the list)

**Consultant**

Bob Taylor  
Department of Development

**Sponsoring Organizations**

(list sponsors)

**Endorsements**

(list endorsements)





SAMPLE LETTER  
THANK YOU TO PARTICIPATING FIRMS

Chief Executive Officer  
Some Company  
Some Address  
Some City, State and Zip

Dear Chief Executive Officer:

Thank you for meeting with our volunteer visitors in the \_\_\_\_\_ BR&E Program. Your participation in this effort has been extremely important to the success of the program.

The information gathered from the estimated \_\_\_\_\_ firms being visited will be analyzed during the next few months. Afterward, recommendations based on that information will be written concerning the economic development in \_\_\_\_\_ County. You will be invited to a report presentation during which the results and recommendations from the program will be announced. I look forward to seeing you at this event which will probably be held in \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_ hotel banquet room \_\_\_\_\_.

Again, thank you for your participation in the BR&E program. Your time and effort have contributed greatly to our efforts in improving the business climate in \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

BR&E Coordinator



# Community

## BR&E Industrial Visitation Program

### Questionnaire Cover Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Firm ID: \_\_\_\_\_

FIRM: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PERSON INTERVIEWED: \_\_\_\_\_

JOB TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

VOLUNTEER VISITORS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





# Community

## BR&E Industrial Visitation Program

### Questionnaire

FIRM ID \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**1.** What are the major products or services produced at this establishment?

- |    |                                  |    |                                    |
|----|----------------------------------|----|------------------------------------|
| 01 | Processed dairy products         | 23 | Machinery, except electric         |
| 02 | Soft drinks/liquor               | 24 | Electric & electronic equipment    |
| 03 | Processed fats/oils              | 25 | Motor vehicles & equipment         |
| 04 | Processed meat products          | 26 | Other transportation equipment     |
| 05 | Processed grains, fruits, etc    | 27 | Instruments & related products     |
| 06 | Tobacco manufactures             | 28 | Other manufacturing products       |
| 07 | Coal, oil, gas                   | 29 | Agricultural services              |
| 08 | Iron, bauxite, etc. ores         | 30 | Food services                      |
| 09 | Construction                     | 31 | Transportation services            |
| 10 | Textile mill products            | 32 | Communications services            |
| 11 | Apparel & other textile products | 33 | Electric, gas, & sanitary services |
| 12 | Lumber & wood                    | 34 | Health services                    |
| 13 | Furniture & fixtures             | 35 | Warehousing/Storage                |
| 14 | Paper & allied products          | 36 | Business services                  |
| 15 | Printing & publishing            | 37 | Lodging services                   |
| 16 | Chemicals & allied products      | 38 | Legal services                     |
| 17 | Petroleum & coal products        | 39 | Educational services               |
| 18 | Rubber & misc plastics           | 40 | Wholesale trade                    |
| 19 | Leather products                 | 41 | Retail trade                       |
| 20 | Stone, clay, & glass products    | 42 | Financial/real estate              |
| 21 | Primary metals                   | 43 | Recreation & amusement             |
| 22 | Fabricated metal products        |    |                                    |
| 44 | Other (Please specify) _____     |    |                                    |

**2.** What is your position with this business?

- a. Owner
- b. Chief Executive Officer / President
- c. Plant Manager
- d. Personnel Officer
- e. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**3.** What is the nature of your establishment?

- a. Single unit firm (Go to **5** )
- b. Headquarters of multi-unit firm (Go to **5** )
- c. Branch plant of multi-unit firm (Go to **4** )

4. If you answered "c" above, where is your firm's headquarters located?

- a. In this business area
- b. In the county
- c. In another county in the State
- d. In the U.S., but outside the State
- e. Abroad

5. In what year was this establishment started in this location under current ownership?

\_\_\_\_\_ Year

6. Where does your firm sell its products or services?

6.1 In the city/county: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

6.2 In the rest of the State: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

6.3 In the rest of the U.S.: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

6.4 Outside of the U.S.: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

TOTAL = 100%

7. Where are your firm's major competitors located?

7.1 In the city/county: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

7.2 In the rest of the State: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

7.3 In the rest of the U.S.: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

7.4 Outside of the U.S.: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

TOTAL = 100%

8.

Please circle the raw materials, supplies, or services that your establishment uses as inputs.

- |    |                                  |    |                                    |
|----|----------------------------------|----|------------------------------------|
| 01 | Milk, cream, etc                 | 27 | Leather products                   |
| 02 | Grains                           | 28 | Stone, clay, & glass products      |
| 03 | Oil seeds                        | 29 | Primary metals                     |
| 04 | Cattle, hogs, sheep              | 30 | Fabricated metal products          |
| 05 | Poultry & eggs                   | 31 | Machinery, except electric         |
| 06 | Nursery/horticulture             | 32 | Electric & electronic equipment    |
| 07 | Fruits & vegetables              | 33 | Motor vehicles & equipment         |
| 08 | Forestry/fishing                 | 34 | Other transportation equipment     |
| 09 | Processed dairy products         | 35 | Instruments & related products     |
| 10 | Soft drinks/liquor               | 36 | Other manufacturing products       |
| 11 | Processed fats/oils              | 37 | Agricultural services              |
| 12 | Processed meat products          | 38 | Food services                      |
| 13 | Processed grains, fruits, etc    | 39 | Transportation services            |
| 14 | Tobacco manufactures             | 40 | Communications services            |
| 15 | Coal, oil, gas                   | 41 | Electric, gas, & sanitary services |
| 16 | Iron, bauxite, etc. ores         | 42 | Health services                    |
| 17 | Construction                     | 43 | Warehousing/storage                |
| 18 | Textile mill products            | 44 | Business services                  |
| 19 | Apparel & other textile products | 45 | Lodging services                   |
| 20 | Lumber & wood                    | 46 | Legal services                     |
| 21 | Furniture & fixtures             | 47 | Educational services               |
| 22 | Paper & allied products          | 48 | Wholesale trade                    |
| 23 | Printing & publishing            | 49 | Retail trade                       |
| 24 | Chemicals & allied products      | 50 | Financial/Real estate              |
| 25 | Petroleum & coal products        | 51 | Recreation & amusement             |
| 26 | Rubber & misc plastics           |    |                                    |

52 Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8.1 Of the items circled, please list the numbers of those inputs of which 50 percent or more are purchased outside the city/county.

\_\_\_\_\_

8.2 Of the items listed in question 8.1, please list those inputs which you think could be economically produced within the city/county.

\_\_\_\_\_



**9.** Indicate the number of employees and benefits provided for each group:

Number of Employees	Average Wage	Health Plan	Retire- ment	Vacation	Sick Leave
	\$/hour	(check if available)		(check if available)	

**9.1** Full-time (Work more than 30 hours per week and at least 9 months per year)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

**9.2** Part-time (Work less than 30 hours per week or less than 9 months per year)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

**10.** Is all or part of your labor force unionized?

- a. No  
b. Yes

**10.1** If yes, what percentage of your labor force is unionized?

- a. Less than 25 %  
b. 25 % to 49 %  
c. 50 % to 74 %  
d. 75 % to 100 %

**11.** Does your firm have problems recruiting employees in the following categories?

Category	Yes = a	No = b	Unsure = c
<b>11.1</b> Unskilled employees	a	b	c
<b>11.2</b> Semi-skilled employees	a	b	c
<b>11.3</b> Skilled employees	a	b	c
<b>11.4</b> Clerical employees	a	b	c
<b>11.5</b> Professional employees	a	b	c
<b>11.6</b> Management	a	b	c

12. If you answered "yes" to any of the above, please circle all factors which apply.

- a. Poor work attitudes
- b. Inadequate labor skills
- c. High cost of training employees
- d. Competition for trained employees
- e. High wage rates for labor
- f. Labor will not migrate into the area
- g. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Overall, how do you rate your employees with respect to their attitude toward work and their productivity?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Very Poor</u>
13.1 Attitude toward work	a	b	c	d	e
13.2 Productivity	a	b	c	d	e

14. Please indicate where your employees live.

- 14.1 In area 1: \_\_\_\_\_ percent
- 14.2 In area 2: \_\_\_\_\_ percent
- 14.3 In area 3: \_\_\_\_\_ percent
- 14.4 In area 4: \_\_\_\_\_ percent
- 14.5 In area 5: \_\_\_\_\_ percent
- 14.6 In area 6: \_\_\_\_\_ percent

TOTAL = 100%

**15.** Did your firm's employment change over the past five years?

- a. No Go to **16**  
b. Yes **15.1** If yes, how many employees worked here 5 years ago?

\_\_\_\_\_ full-time employees

\_\_\_\_\_ part-time employees

**15.2** Please circle the 3 main reasons for the employment change over the past 5 years.

- a. Technological changes
- b. Change in management
- c. Growth in demand, or lack of
- d. Number of contracts
- e. Business did not exist 5 years ago
- f. Improved or decreased efficiency
- g. Government regulation
- h. Increased competition
- i. Renovation/expansion
- j. New products/services
- k. Entered new markets
- l. Change in subcontracting
- m. Corporate decisions/policies
- n. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**16.** Will your firm's employment change within next five years?

- a. No Go to **17**  
b. Yes **16.1** If yes, what is the projected employment level in 5 years?

\_\_\_\_\_ full-time employees

\_\_\_\_\_ part-time employees

**16.2** Please circle the 3 main reasons for the employment change in the next 5 years.

- a. Technological changes
- b. Change in management
- c. Growth in demand, or lack of
- d. Number of contracts
- e. Business did not exist 5 years ago
- f. Improved or decreased efficiency
- g. Government regulation
- h. Increased competition
- i. Renovation/expansion
- j. New products/services
- k. Entered new markets
- l. Change in subcontracting
- m. Corporate decisions/policies
- n. Other \_\_\_\_\_

17.

From the list below, choose 5 factors likely to have a major impact on your establishment's profits during the next 5 years. Please rank the 5 factors from 1 through 5, with 1 being the most important.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. New products
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Changing consumer tastes
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Demographics
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Higher consumer incomes
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. Defense spending
- \_\_\_\_\_ f. Foreign competition
- \_\_\_\_\_ g. Domestic competition
- \_\_\_\_\_ h. Raw material shortages
- \_\_\_\_\_ i. Energy costs
- \_\_\_\_\_ j. Transportation costs
- \_\_\_\_\_ k. Wage rates
- \_\_\_\_\_ l. Raw material costs
- \_\_\_\_\_ m. New technology making older plants obsolete
- \_\_\_\_\_ n. Financing availability
- \_\_\_\_\_ o. Taxes/government policies
- \_\_\_\_\_ p. Other factor: \_\_\_\_\_

18.

Are there any major technological innovations on the horizon in your industry that might affect your firm? (Please circle one of the following 3 answers.)

- a. Yes (If "Yes", please go to question **19** )
- b. No (If "No", please skip to question **20** )
- c. Not sure (If "Not sure", please skip to question **20** )

19.

If you answered "Yes" to Question 18, please indicate the category under which these innovations fall and whether or not you would like more information about them.

<u>Type of Innovation</u>		<u>Yes=a</u>	<u>No=b</u>	<u>Unsure=c</u>
1.	Computer technology	a	b	c
2.	Low-cost substitutes	a	b	c
3.	Quality control systems	a	b	c
4.	Routinizing production processes	a	b	c
5.	Robotics	a	b	c
6.	Lasers	a	b	c
7.	New materials (that is, alloys, etc.)	a	b	c
8.	Industry-specific innovations	a	b	c
9.	Other (specify): _____	a	b	c



**20.** Do you own or lease sufficient property to renovate or expand your business?

- a. Yes
- b. No

**21.** Are you considering renovating or expanding your building or facilities?

- a. No Go to **22**
- b. Yes **21.1**

Do you face constraints to renovation or expansion? Circle all that apply.

- a. No constraints
- b. Need financial assistance
- c. Current work force does not have sufficient skills
- d. Insufficient time to make arrangements
- e. Insufficient space available
- f. Management needs planning assistance
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**21.2** In planning for changes, have you requested assistance from any organization listed below? If so, circle all that apply.

- a. Local development department
- b. Community improvement corporation
- c. Area chamber of commerce
- d. Small Business Development Center
- e. Governor's regional office
- f. Other state agency
- g. Mayor's office
- h. Planning agency/department
- i. Local education institution
- j. University Cooperative Extension Service
- k. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- l. None

**21.3** Identify those organizations from which you would like to receive assistance.

- a. Local development department
- b. Community improvement corporation
- c. Area chamber of commerce
- d. Small Business Development Center
- e. Governor's regional office
- f. Other state agency
- g. Mayor's office
- h. Planning agency/department
- i. Local education institution
- j. University Cooperative Extension Service
- k. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- l. None

22.

Are you currently considering opening another branch of your firm?

a. No Go to 23

b. Yes 22.1 If yes, when do you plan to open?

- a. Within 6 months
- b. In 6 months to 1 year
- c. In 1 to 3 years
- d. In more than 3 years

22.2 Where are you considering opening?

- a. Elsewhere in this business area
- b. To a different business area in the city/county
- c. Elsewhere in the State, to \_\_\_\_\_ County
- d. Outside of the State
- e. Undecided

23.

Are you planning to move this establishment?

a. No Go to 24

b. Yes 23.1 If yes, when do you plan to move?

- a. Within 6 months
- b. In 6 months to 1 year
- c. In 1 to 3 years
- d. In more than 3 years

23.2 Why are you considering moving?

- a. Changing market conditions
- b. Overcrowded building
- c. No land for expansion
- d. Transportation problems
- e. Crime/vandalism
- f. Low work productivity
- g. Environmental concerns
- h. Rigid code enforcement
- i. High local taxes
- j. High state taxes
- k. Lease expiration
- l. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

23.3 To where are you considering moving?

- a. Elsewhere in this business area
- b. To a different business area in the city/county
- c. Elsewhere in the State, to \_\_\_\_\_ County
- d. Outside of the State
- e. Undecided

**24.**

Are you planning to permanently close or sell this establishment?

- a. No Go to **25**
- b. Yes **24.1** If yes, when do you plan to close or sell your establishment?

- a. Within 6 months
- b. In 6 months to 1 year
- c. In 1 to 3 years
- d. In more than 3 years

**24.2** Why are you closing or selling your establishment?

---

---

---

**25.**

To meet a current or recent financial need, what type of capital are you considering or did you consider?

- a. Equity capital Go to **26**
- b. Debt capital **25.1** If you plan to use debt capital, which of the following financial institutions do you plan to use or did you use? Circle all that apply.

- a. Commercial bank
- b. Savings and loan
- c. Federal loan program (USDA, SBA)
- d. Low interest loan program
- e. County revolving loan fund
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**25.2** When you sought your most recent loan, what types of activities or facilities did (do) you hope to finance. Circle all that apply.

- a. Purchase of land without buildings
- b. Purchase of land with building(s)
- c. Building construction
- d. Building expansion
- e. Building renovation
- f. Operating capital
- g. Inventory
- h. Machinery or equipment
- i. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**25.3** Was your most recent loan approved?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Approval is pending

26.

With your permission, we would like to share your answer to Question 26, and your firm name, with the Department of Development. Do we have your permission to do so?

- a. Yes
- b. No

- 26.1 Is your establishment currently involved in international export?
- a. Yes (If "Yes", please answer Questions 26.2, 26.3, 26.4, and 26.5)
  - b. No (If "No", please answer Question 26.6)

- 26.2 If answered "Yes" to Question 26.1, what is the nature of your involvement in international export?
- a. Direct export sales outside the U.S.
  - b. Export through foreign agents/distributors
  - c. Not sure

- 26.3 If answered "Yes" to Question 26.1, with which regions/countries are you involved?
- a. Western Europe
  - b. Canada
  - c. Middle East
  - d. East Asia
  - e. Latin America
  - f. Eastern Europe and the former U.S.S.R.
  - g. Sub-Saharan Africa
  - h. Not sure

- 26.4 Please list the three countries to which you export most.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 26.5 If answered "Yes" to Question 26.1, do you have any problem exporting your product(s) abroad?

- a. No
  - b. Yes
- 26.5.1 If yes, check all that apply.
- a. Unfavorable exchange rates
  - b. High tariffs and/or trade barriers
  - c. Lack of export financing
  - d. Restrictive state and/or federal regulations
  - e. Inadequate knowledge of foreign countries and/or markets
  - f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

- 26.6 If answered "No" to Question 26.1, what prevents your business from exporting its product(s) abroad? (Check all that apply).

- a. Business is too small
- b. Business designed to serve specific area
- c. Lack of knowledge of foreign countries and/or markets
- d. Lack of specific export knowledge
- e. Lack of state and/or federal assistance
- f. Unfavorable exchange rates
- g. High tariffs and/or trade barriers
- h. Restrictive state and/or federal regulations
- i. Lack of affordable financing
- j. Costs are too high
- k. Never considered it before
- l. Currently engaged in export planning
- m. Tough competition
- n. Other \_\_\_\_\_



27.

From your perspective as a business person, please rate the following factors:

	(a) Excellent	(b) Good	(c) Fair	(d) Poor	(e) Very poor	(f) Don't Know/Not Applicable
1. Labor availability	a	b	c	d	e	f
2. Skilled labor availability	a	b	c	d	e	f
3. Building costs (rent or own)	a	b	c	d	e	f
4. Transportation costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
5. Energy costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
6. Land costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
7. Energy resources	a	b	c	d	e	f
8. Public utility costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
9. Health care costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
10. Workers compensation costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
11. Environmental regulations	a	b	c	d	e	f
12. OSHA requirements	a	b	c	d	e	f
13. Reliability of public utilities	a	b	c	d	e	f
14. Local taxes	a	b	c	d	e	f
15. State taxes	a	b	c	d	e	f
16. Quality of life	a	b	c	d	e	f
17. Access to higher education	a	b	c	d	e	f
18. Recreational opportunities	a	b	c	d	e	f

28.

From your perspective as a business person, please rate the following services:

	(a) Excellent	(b) Good	(c) Fair	(d) Poor	(e) Very poor	(f) Don't Know/Not Applicable
1. Roads, highways, freeways	a	b	c	d	e	f
2. Street and sidewalk cleaning	a	b	c	d	e	f
3. Parking	a	b	c	d	e	f
4. Snow/ice removal	a	b	c	d	e	f
5. Street repair	a	b	c	d	e	f
6. Sewers	a	b	c	d	e	f
7. Water	a	b	c	d	e	f
8. Police protection	a	b	c	d	e	f
9. Fire protection	a	b	c	d	e	f
10. Solid waste disposal	a	b	c	d	e	f
11. Inspection (codes, health, etc.)	a	b	c	d	e	f
12. Emergency medical services	a	b	c	d	e	f
13. Medical care, hospitals, doctors	a	b	c	d	e	f
14. Electrical service	a	b	c	d	e	f
15. Telecommunications	a	b	c	d	e	f
16. Natural gas service	a	b	c	d	e	f
17. Schools	a	b	c	d	e	f
18. Technical & vocational training	a	b	c	d	e	f
19. Rail service	a	b	c	d	e	f
20. Air service	a	b	c	d	e	f
21. Public transportation	a	b	c	d	e	f
22. Accounting and legal services	a	b	c	d	e	f
23. Financial services	a	b	c	d	e	f

29.

What is your overall opinion of the city/county as a place to conduct business?

- a. Excellent
- b. Good
- c. Fair
- d. Poor
- e. No opinion

30.

From the list below, what are the best features of the city/county from a business and personal point of view? Please circle up to 4.

- a. Good services (fire, health, etc.)
- b. Good business environment
- c. Community's size
- d. People
- e. Excellent location/proximity
- f. Scenic area
- g. Good housing
- h. Land availability
- i. Favorable wage rates
- j. Abundant labor
- k. Good work ethic
- l. Cost of living
- m. Schools
- n. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

31.

On which issues or areas would you like to receive technical assistance.

- a. Employee training, such as JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act)
- b. Financial management
- c. Record keeping
- d. International export assistance
- e. Environmental regulations, such as waste & effluent, EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)
- f. Other regulations (licensing, labeling, zoning, building codes, etc.)
- g. Health Care, insurance, etc.
- h. Other insurance, liability, etc.
- i. Employee safety, such as OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Agency)
- j. Workers compensation
- k. Small Business Administration programs
- l. State welfare programs
- m. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

32. On which programs would you like to receive written information.

- a. Federal and state low interest loans
- b. Federal and state grants for communities
- c. Federal and state bond programs
- d. Grants for rehabilitating buildings
- e. Tax abatements (e.g. enterprize zones)
- f. Packaging traditional loans
- g. International export assistance
- h. Federal and state minority programs
- i. Changing zoning regulations
- j. Building codes
- k. Creating an historic preservation district
- l. Consumer surveying and market analysis
- m. Employee selection and recruitment
- n. Agency permits (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- o. Other \_\_\_\_\_

33. On which topics do you or your management employees need training and you or other management employees would be willing to attend a seminar or workshop of 2 hours to 2 days.

- a. Merchandising: interior design and displays
- b. General business management
- c. Employee management
- d. Inventory control
- e. Computerized sales, inventory, and ordering
- f. Leases
- g. International export assistance
- h. Marketing and advertising for individual business
- i. Joint promotion and marketing of area
- j. Organization of businessmen's association
- k. Sales techniques/customer relations
- l. Hospitality training
- m. Loan application preparation
- n. Business planning
- o. Other \_\_\_\_\_

34. What specific concerns would you like to see addressed? These can include concerns mentioned earlier or concerns not yet addressed by the survey. List up to four.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Local Questions:

*Thank you for your cooperation with the Business Retention and Expansion Visitation Program. The information you have provided will be analyzed, along with that from other local businesses, to help local leaders determine how best to stimulate economic development in our community. The results of this program will be presented to the community about six months from now.*



## Community

### Follow-up Suggestions

FIRM ID: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this short form together in your car immediately after the interview.

1. What is the firm representatives's key concern or key information request?

2. Rank the urgency of scheduling a follow-up meeting with this business. For example, if the firm is considering relocation, closing, or expanding, follow-up by the BR&E Coordinator or Consultant is urgent. If, however, the only real need expressed by the firm representative is to receive information about labor training or financing programs, then the urgency is low. Rank the urgency of follow-up from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important.

Urgency of Follow-up: 1      2      3      4      5

*Please be sure that your answers and comments are written in ink and are legible. Be sure not to discuss the information convened during the interview to anyone except your team partner and the BR&E Coordinator.*

**Please return this survey to:**

# Community

## BR&E Retail/Tourism Visitation Program

### Questionnaire Cover Sheet

FIRM ID: \_\_\_\_\_

FIRM: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PERSON INTERVIEWED: \_\_\_\_\_

JOB TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

VOLUNTEER VISITORS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# COMMUNITY

## BR&E RETAIL/TOURISM VISITATION PROGRAM

### QUESTIONNAIRE

FIRM ID \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are the major products or services provided at this establishment?

- |                              |                             |                                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 01 Accounting                | 22 Farm equipment/supplies  | 43 Legal services                 |
| 02 Antiques                  | 23 Ferry excursion services | 44 Marina                         |
| 03 Appliances                | 24 Financial (banks, S&L)   | 45 Medical and dental services    |
| 04 Auto sales/services       | 25 Fish processing/cleaning | 46 Men's apparel                  |
| 05 Bakery                    | 26 Floor/Wall coverings     | 47 Music (tapes, CDs, etc.) store |
| 06 Bait & tackle shop        | 27 Florist                  | 48 Photography                    |
| 07 Bar/lounge                | 28 Furniture                | 49 Real estate                    |
| 08 Bed & breakfast           | 29 Galleries                | 50 Religious                      |
| 09 Book store                | 30 General merchandise      | 51 Rental housing                 |
| 10 Bowling alley             | 31 General clothing         | 52 Resort                         |
| 11 Campground                | 32 Gift shop                | 53 Restaurant                     |
| 12 Charter fishing           | 33 Golf course or shop      | 54 Service station                |
| 13 Children's apparel        | 34 Grocery                  | 55 Shoe repair                    |
| 14 Convenience store         | 35 Hair stylist             | 56 Souvenir shop                  |
| 15 Craft shop                | 36 Hardware/Lumber          | 57 Sporting goods                 |
| 16 Deli/Snack shop           | 37 Health food              | 58 Spa/fitness club               |
| 17 Department store          | 38 Historical attractions   | 59 Specialty shops                |
| 18 Distributorship           | 39 Hotel/motel              | 60 Variety store                  |
| 19 Drug store/Pharmacy       | 40 Insurance                | 61 Video tape rental              |
| 20 Dry cleaners              | 41 Jewelry                  | 62 Women's apparel                |
| 21 Electronic/Computer store | 42 Lawn & Garden            |                                   |
- 63 Other professional (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 64 Other retail (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 65 Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your position with this business?

- a. Owner/manager
- b. Manager
- c. Supervisor
- d. Employee

3. In which of the following areas are you located?

- a. Community specified Region 1
- b. Community specified Region 2
- c. Community specified Region 3
- d. Community specified Region 4
- e. Elsewhere in city/county



4. Which of the following best describes your business?

- a. Locally owned and operated
- b. Regional chain
- c. National chain
- d. Franchise

4.1 If the business is locally owned and operated, circle all the following items that apply:

- a. Family business
- b. Sole proprietorship
- c. Partnership
- d. For-profit corporation
- e. Non-profit corporation
- f. Cooperative

5. Do you own or lease this location?

- a. Own
- b. Lease

6. In what year was this business started in this location under current ownership?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Indicate the number of employees and benefits provided for each group:

Number of Employees	Average Wage	Health Plan	Retire- ment	Vacation	Sick Leave
	\$/hour	(check if available)		(check if available)	

1. Full-time, permanent:

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Full-time, seasonal:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Part-time:

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Is all or part of your labor force unionized?
- a. No
- b. Yes      8.1      If yes, what percentage of your labor force is unionized?
- a. Less than 25 %
- b. 25 % to 49 %
- c. 50 % to 74 %
- d. 75 % to 100 %

9. Does your company have problems recruiting employees in the following categories?

<u>Category</u>		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Unsure</u>
1.	Sales	a	b	c
2.	Clerical	a	b	c
3.	Maintenance	a	b	c
4.	Janitorial	a	b	c
5.	Technician	a	b	c
6.	Management	a	b	c

10. If you answered "yes" above, circle the items below that best describe the nature of your recruiting problem.

- a. Poor work attitudes
- b. Inadequate labor skills
- c. High cost of training employees
- d. Competition for seasonal or part-time employees
- e. High wage rates for labor
- f. Workers will not migrate into the area
- g. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Overall, how do you rate your employees with respect to their work attitude and quality?

		<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Very Poor</u>
1.	Attitude toward work	a	b	c	d	e
2.	Quality of work	a	b	c	d	e

12. Do you think your storefront or another part of your building requires any improvements to attract customers?

- a. No      Go to 13
- b. Yes      If yes, please describe needed improvements below:

---



---



---

**13.** Do you own or lease sufficient property to renovate or expand your business?

- a. Yes
- b. No

**14.** Are you considering renovating or expanding your building or facilities?

- a. No Go to **15**

b. Yes **14.1** Do you face constraints to renovation or expansion? Circle all that apply.

- a. No constraints
- b. Need financial assistance
- c. Current work force does not have sufficient skills
- d. Insufficient time to make arrangements
- e. Insufficient space available
- f. Management needs planning assistance
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**14.2** In planning for changes, have you requested assistance from any organization listed below? If so, circle all that apply.

- a. Local development department
- b. Community improvement corporation
- c. Area chamber of commerce
- d. Small Business Development Center
- e. Governor's regional office
- f. Other state agency
- g. Mayor's office
- h. Planning agency/department
- i. Visitors Bureau
- j. Local education institution
- k. University Cooperative Extension Service
- l. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- m. None

**14.3** Identify those organizations from which you would like to receive assistance.

- a. Local development department
- b. Community improvement corporation
- c. Area chamber of commerce
- d. Small Business Development Center
- e. Governor's regional office
- f. Other state agency
- g. Mayor's office
- h. Planning agency/department
- i. Visitors Bureau
- j. Local education institution
- k. University Cooperative Extension Service
- l. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- m. None

**15.**

Are you currently considering opening another outlet for your business?

- a. No      Go to **16**
- b. Yes     **15.1**    If yes, when do you plan to open?
  - a.      Within 6 months
  - b.      In 6 months to 1 year
  - c.      In 1 to 3 years
  - d.      In more than 3 years

**15.2**    Where are you considering opening?

- a.      Elsewhere in my business area
- b.      To a different business area in my county
- c.      Outside of the county, to \_\_\_\_\_
- d.      Undecided

**16.**

Are you planning to move this business?

- a. No      Go to **17**
- b. Yes     **16.1**    If yes, when do you plan to move?
  - a.      Within 6 months
  - b.      In 6 months to 1 year
  - c.      In 1 to 3 years
  - d.      In more than 3 years

**16.2**    Why are you considering moving?

---

---

---

**16.3**    To where are you considering moving?

- a.      Elsewhere in my business area
- b.      To a different business area in my county
- c.      Outside of the county, to \_\_\_\_\_
- d.      Undecided



**17.**

Are you planning to permanently close or sell your business?

a. No Go to **18**

b. Yes **17.1** If yes, when do you plan to close your business?

- a. Within 6 months
- b. In 6 months to 1 year
- c. In 1 to 3 years
- d. In more than 3 years

**17.2** Why are you closing or selling your business?

---

---

---

**18.**

Have you or has your business sought or applied for business loan(s)?

a. No

b. Yes **18.1** Which of the following best describes the financial institution from which you sought the most recent loan?

- a. Commercial bank
- b. Savings and Loan
- c. Federal loan program (FmHA, SBA, etc.)
- d. Low interest loan program
- e. County revolving loan fund
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**18.2** When you sought your most recent loan, what types of activities or facilities did (do) you hope to finance. Circle all that apply.

- a. Purchase of land without buildings
- b. Purchase of land with building(s)
- c. Building construction
- d. Building expansion
- e. Building renovation
- f. Operating capital
- g. Inventory
- h. Machinery or equipment
- i. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**18.3** Was your most recent loan approved?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Approval is pending

19. Over the last 3 years, have the following business factors increased, stayed the same, or declined?

		a. Increased	b. Stayed the same	c. Declined
1.	Number of customers	a	b	c
2.	Sales quantity volume	a	b	c
3.	Sales dollar volume	a	b	c
4.	Profit	a	b	c

20. If you indicated in the above question that any of the business factors changed, indicate the reasons for those changes below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

21. Circle below any of the business activities which you have done in the past three years and/or any you plan to do in the next two years:

		a. Done in the past 3 years	b. Plan to do within 2 years
1.	Upgrade(d) your mix of goods and/or services	a	b
2.	Remodel(ed) facilities	a	b
3.	Change(d) business hours	a	b
4.	Participate(d) in joint marketing efforts	a	b
5.	Attend(ed) business training	a	b
6.	Computerize(d) records/inventory	a	b

22. Where do most of your customers live? Please rank the following four options using a one (1) to indicate the area where the greatest number of your customers live and a four (4) to indicate where the fewest customers reside.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. In the city or town in which I do business
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Outside a city or town but in the county in which I do business
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. In a neighboring county
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Outside this and a neighboring county

23.

Please rank your business seasons. Place a one (1) on the line to the left of your peak season, then continue through to indicate your lowest or slowest season with a four (4).

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Spring (March, April, May)
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Summer (June, July, August)
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Fall (September, October, November)
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Winter (December, January, February)

24.

Please rank your business days. Place a one (1) on the line to the left of your busiest day, then continue through to indicate your least busy day with a seven (7).

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Sunday
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Monday
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Tuesday
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Wednesday
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. Thursday
- \_\_\_\_\_ f. Friday
- \_\_\_\_\_ g. Saturday

25.

Please rank your business hours. Place a one (1) on the line to the left of your busiest period, then continue through to indicate your least busy hours with a five (5)..

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Morning (before 11:30 am)
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Lunch (11:30 am - 1:30 pm)
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Afternoon (1:30 pm - 6:00 pm)
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Evening (6 pm - 9 pm)
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. Night (after 9 pm)

26.

Please rank the five types of advertising which you used most within the past year? Place one (1) on the line to the left of the most used type of advertising, then continue through to indicate the fifth most used type of advertising with a five (5).

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Yellow pages
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Daily newspaper
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Weekly newspaper
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Weekly shopper paper
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. Radio
- \_\_\_\_\_ f. TV
- \_\_\_\_\_ g. Billboards
- \_\_\_\_\_ h. Direct mail advertising
- \_\_\_\_\_ i. Visitor's guides
- \_\_\_\_\_ j. Magazines
- \_\_\_\_\_ k. Brochures/flyers/shopping bags
- \_\_\_\_\_ l. Other \_\_\_\_\_

27.

Do you provide credit to your customers?

- a. No      Go to **28**
- b. Yes    **27.1**    If yes, which of the following do you use to finance the customer credit?
  - a.      Revolving loan from a commercial bank
  - b.      Revolving loan from your supplier
  - c.      Your business carries the loan
  - d.      Other \_\_\_\_\_

28.

1.      How would you rate the shopping atmosphere in your business area?

- a.      Excellent
- b.      Good
- c.      Average
- d.      Fair
- e.      Poor

2.      How would you rate your area's hospitality to tourists?

- a.      Excellent
- b.      Good
- c.      Average
- d.      Fair
- e.      Poor

29.

Do you share advertising expenses with other businesses for the promotion of your business area?

- a.      Yes      **29.1**      If yes, circle all the following efforts you support:
  - a.      Cooperative advertising
  - b.      Cooperative coupons
  - c.      Promotions and special events
- b.      No      **29.2**      If no, would you *consider* sharing the advertising expense with other businesses for the promotion of your business area?
  - a.      No
  - b.      Yes      **29.3**      If yes, circle all the following efforts you would consider:
    - a.      Cooperative advertising
    - b.      Cooperative coupons
    - c.      Promotions and special events



**30.** From your perspective as a business person, please rank the five (5) items which are the most needed improvements for your business area. Place one (1) on the line to the left of the most critical need, then continue through to indicate the fifth most critical need with a five (5).

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Improvement of the exterior atmosphere of the area, such as front entrances, rear entrances, landscaping, street trees, sidewalks, cleanliness, and attractive signs
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Reduction of traffic congestion on streets in the area
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Improvement of the parking situation, such as more spaces and/or spaces that are more conveniently located
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Improved public safety through better street lighting or better security
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. Additional businesses which result in greater variety
- \_\_\_\_\_ f. Special events or promotions in the area
- \_\_\_\_\_ g. Better merchandising
- \_\_\_\_\_ h. More competitive prices
- \_\_\_\_\_ i. Increased advertising done on an individual basis
- \_\_\_\_\_ j. Increased group advertising
- \_\_\_\_\_ k. Increased business hours
- \_\_\_\_\_ l. Increased lodging facilities
- \_\_\_\_\_ m. Better quality of merchandise handled by merchants
- \_\_\_\_\_ n. Better customer service
- \_\_\_\_\_ o. More variety of places to eat in the area
- \_\_\_\_\_ p. More knowledgeable and friendly personnel
- \_\_\_\_\_ q. Convention/Conference facility
- \_\_\_\_\_ r. Other (Please list) \_\_\_\_\_

**31.** From your perspective as a business person, what are the three most important additional retail/tourism or service businesses needed to improve the attractiveness of the area in which you do business? Please list the business types by number from **question 1** of this questionnaire (or describe if type is not in question 1).

\_\_\_\_\_

**32.** From your perspective as a business person, please rate the following factors:

		a	b	c	d	e	f
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
1.	Labor availability	a	b	c	d	e	f
2.	Skilled labor availability	a	b	c	d	e	f
3.	Building costs (rent or own)	a	b	c	d	e	f
4.	Local taxes	a	b	c	d	e	f
5.	State taxes	a	b	c	d	e	f
6.	Transportation costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
7.	Public utility costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
8.	Health care costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
9.	Workers compensation costs	a	b	c	d	e	f
10.	Environmental regulations	a	b	c	d	e	f
11.	OSHA requirements	a	b	c	d	e	f
12.	Quality of life	a	b	c	d	e	f
13.	Access to higher education	a	b	c	d	e	f
14.	Recreational opportunities	a	b	c	d	e	f

33.

From your perspective as a business person, please rate the following services:

		a	b	c	d	e	f
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
1.	Roads, highways, freeways	a	b	c	d	e	f
2.	Street and sidewalk cleaning	a	b	c	d	e	f
3.	Parking	a	b	c	d	e	f
4.	Snow/ice removal	a	b	c	d	e	f
5.	Street repairs	a	b	c	d	e	f
6.	Sewers	a	b	c	d	e	f
7.	Water	a	b	c	d	e	f
8.	Police protection	a	b	c	d	e	f
9.	Fire protection	a	b	c	d	e	f
10.	Solid waste disposal	a	b	c	d	e	f
11.	Inspection (codes, health, etc.)	a	b	c	d	e	f
12.	Emergency medical services	a	b	c	d	e	f
13.	Medical care, hospitals, doctors	a	b	c	d	e	f
14.	Electrical service	a	b	c	d	e	f
15.	Telecommunications (phone service)	a	b	c	d	e	f
16.	Natural gas service	a	b	c	d	e	f
17.	Schools	a	b	c	d	e	f
18.	Technical & vocational training	a	b	c	d	e	f
19.	Rail service	a	b	c	d	e	f
20.	Air service	a	b	c	d	e	f
21.	Public transportation	a	b	c	d	e	f
22.	Accounting and legal services	a	b	c	d	e	f
23.	Financial services	a	b	c	d	e	f

34.

On which issues or areas would you like to receive technical assistance.

- a. Employee training, such as JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act)
- b. Financial management
- c. Record keeping
- d. Environmental regulations, such as waste & effluent, EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)
- e. Other regulations (licensing, labeling, zoning, building codes, etc.)
- f. Health Care, insurance, etc.
- g. Other insurance, liability, etc.
- h. Employee safety, such as OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Agency)
- i. Workers compensation
- j. Small Business Administration programs
- k. State welfare programs
- l. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

35. On which programs would you like to receive written information.

- a. Federal and state low interest loans
- b. Federal and state grants for communities
- c. Federal and state bond programs
- d. Grants for rehabilitating buildings
- e. Tax abatements (e.g. enterprize zones)
- f. Packaging traditional loans
- g. Federal and state minority programs
- h. Changing zoning regulations
- i. Building codes
- j. Creating an historic preservation district
- k. Consumer surveying and market analysis
- l. Employee selection and recruitment
- m. Agency permits (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- n. Other \_\_\_\_\_

36. On which topics do you or your management employees need training and you or other management employees would be willing to attend a seminar or workshop of 2 hours to 2 days.

- a. Merchandising: interior design and displays
- b. General business management
- c. Employee management
- d. Inventory control
- e. Computerized sales, inventory, and ordering
- f. Leases
- g. Marketing and advertising for individual business
- h. Joint promotion and marketing of area
- i. Organization of businessmen's association
- j. Salesmanship/customer relations
- k. Hospitality training
- l. Loan application preparation
- m. Business planning
- n. Other \_\_\_\_\_

37. What specific concerns would you like to see addressed? (These can include ones mentioned earlier or ones not yet addressed by the survey.) (List up to four.)

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Local Questions :

*Thank you for your cooperation with the Business Retention and Expansion Visitation Program.*

*The information you have provided will be analyzed, along with that from other local businesses to help local leaders determine how best to stimulate economic development in our community.*

*The results of this program will be presented to the community about six months from now.*



**Community**  
**Follow-up Suggestions**

FIRM ID: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this short form together in your car immediately after the interview.

1. What is the firm representatives's key concern or key information request?

2. Rank the urgency of scheduling a follow-up meeting with this business. For example, if the firm is considering relocation, closing, or expanding, follow-up by the BR&E Coordinator or Consultant is urgent. If, however, the only real need expressed by the firm representative is to receive information about labor training or financing programs, then the urgency is low. Rank the urgency of follow-up from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important.

Urgency of Follow-up:    1            2            3            4            5

*Please be sure that your answers and comments are written in ink and are legible. Be sure not to discuss the information conveyed during the interview to anyone except your team partner and the BR&E Coordinator.*

**Please return this survey to:**



# Notes

## **VI. VOLUNTEER VISITORS**

Recruiting volunteers, training volunteers and volunteer visitations are discussed in this section.

### **A. RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS**

Recruiting volunteer visitors is a critical step in organizing your BR&E program because the visitors, perhaps more than any other players, represent the program to local firms; thus, their performance influences the success of the program. Enthusiastic, friendly, informed, and eager volunteers are likely to have better visits than those who are unsure, less friendly, and less committed. The volunteers are critical also because they gather the information which is the basis for the final report and recommendations.

#### **Determining the Number of Volunteers Needed**

The suggested number of volunteers equals half the number of firms you plan to visit during the program. If you plan to visit 100 firms, for example, you need to recruit 50 volunteers. This ratio is based on the assumption that each volunteer will be paired with another, and together, they will visit four firms.

Volunteers must visit firms in teams of two. You can, however, have each team visit fewer or more firms than four. If you reduce the number of visits per team, you will need to recruit more volunteers. If you increase the number of visits per team, you will need to recruit fewer. Four visits per team seems to be very reasonable.

We have found that few volunteer visitors drop out of the program after they have attended the Volunteer Training Session (discussed later in this section). Since some of your volunteers will be unable to attend the session (illness, conflict in meetings, etc.), you should recruit more volunteers than you need. We recommend from observation that you recruit about 10 percent more visitors than you need. Thus, if you need 50 volunteers, recruit 55.

Volunteers who do not attend the training session rarely complete their assignments which only delays the program; therefore, we recommend that these volunteers not be assigned visits.

#### **Types of Volunteer Visitors**

Volunteer visitors in previous programs have represented a cross-section of professions and organizations. Ministers, plumbers, and school superintendents have all been volunteer visitors. Irrespective of role, all volunteers should be enthusiastic about the program, influential in the community and must understand the confidentiality of the information they will be gathering. Local influential leaders who are or have been active in the community are usually the best volunteer visitors because they recognize the importance of helping to improve the community's economy.



Local leaders should include people from both the private and public sectors. Volunteers, such as businessperson, from the private sector legitimize the program from a business' point of view. The program is perceived as more of a community effort than a "chamber" or "council" or "city" effort. In some communities, these labels may damage the credibility of the program. Volunteers, such as chamber of commerce executives, from the public sector, however, are important to the program because they have the resources, contacts, and leverage to address many of the concerns that firms reveal during the visits.

In some rare cases, it might be best not to recruit certain elected officials for personality reasons. One of the purposes of the program is to identify firms' criticisms of local and state government. If the mayor or other prominent elected official visits a firm, the firm representative might be reluctant to share the criticism of local government if that criticism somehow involves the mayor's office. Even if the representative shares this criticism, the mayor may take offense and stifle the exchange of information. Elected officials must be resilient and listen objectively to the firm's opinion even if that opinion criticizes their work. Most elected officials understand this situation. Accordingly, they reassure the firm representative that the primary purpose of the visit is to gather information, not defend their work. We strongly encourage you to recruit elected officials, such as mayors, chamber executives, county commissioners, councilmen, and other local government officials, as long as they understand the purpose of the visits.

As stated earlier, volunteers from the private and public sectors must be recruited. These volunteers can include bankers, realtors, teachers, school superintendents, doctors, extension agents, local development department representatives, clergymen, hospital administrators, businessperson, retirees, planners, engineers, newspaper editors and publishers, university professors, secretaries, restaurant owners, salespeople, plant managers, and even law enforcement officials. All of these people can be great volunteers if they are enthusiastic about the program.

### Why Should a Volunteer Participate?

When you begin recruiting volunteers for the program, several may ask you directly why they should participate. This is a difficult question to answer because there is no real tangible reward (except for the final report and summary) for the volunteer.

Many volunteers participate because they care about the economic development of their community. Some (elected officials, extension agents) participate because the program is essentially an extension of their current job. Some participate because they want to learn more about local establishments. Some (new residents) participate because they want to learn more about their community in general. Some (elected officials, retirees, new residents, businessmen) participate because they want to meet new people and develop more personal and professional relationships. Still others (retirees, housewives) participate because they want to become more active in their community. And still others participate because of peer-pressure. These are just some of the reasons that motivate volunteers to participate in the program.

## Ways to Recruit Volunteers

Since you have already submitted your application for the program, you have a partial list of volunteer visitors who have agreed to participate. To help you complete your list, we suggest the following recruiting hints:

1. First, contact potential volunteers in person.

Although time-consuming, contacting potential volunteers personally greatly improves the response rate. Phone calls are the next best option followed by letters. Letters, however, seem to be ineffective. To distribute this burden, involve the Task Force, asking each to personally request the participation of several (two to five) potential volunteers whom they know.

The initial contact should be followed by a letter explaining the overall objective of the program, the volunteer's critical role in it, and the date, time, and location of the Volunteer Training Session he/she needs to attend. A sample letter is provided in this section.

(Although Volunteer Training is discussed next, one point is made here. Two identical training sessions are held on the same day. Volunteers need only attend one session. We always schedule two sessions because it reduces the number of volunteers in each session and allows the volunteers to decide which session best fits their schedules.)

2. Return to those organizations that endorsed your program and ask for volunteers. These organizations are likely to provide several volunteers as part of their support for the program.
3. Try to obtain media coverage (newspaper articles) about the program prior to your recruiting. When contacted, some of the volunteers may have already read about the program which lends credibility and generates enthusiasm for your local effort.

## **B. TRAINING VOLUNTEERS**

After you have recruited your volunteer visitors, two Volunteer Training Sessions are held to prepare the volunteers for their visits. Volunteers need to attend only one of these sessions, but attendance is mandatory.

Volunteers who do not attend a session either delay the program by not visiting their firms or tarnish its credibility by conducting poor visits. In other programs, coordinators have discussed the program on a one-to-one basis with those volunteers who missed the training sessions. These coordinators have told us that despite this briefing, these volunteers tend not to complete visits. The apparent correlation between



missing the sessions and failing to complete assignments may indicate the volunteers' lack of confidence in visiting firms, their lack of understanding of the program, or even their lack of time to give to this effort despite their assurances otherwise. The end result is that experienced coordinators recommend that volunteers who cannot attend a session should not conduct visits.

### Prior to Holding the Training Sessions

#### Materials Needed

Before holding your training sessions, send the BR&E staff member the following information:

1. a list of the volunteers' names, occupations, and public offices held;
2. one set of adhesive labels (like mailing labels) with the names, SIC codes, contact persons, addresses, and phone numbers of each firm to be visited;
3. a list of the volunteer teams and their firm assignments;
4. two sets of adhesive labels with the names, addresses, and phone numbers of each volunteer visitor;
5. your local questions; and
6. (optional) the Coordinators' business cards (the number of cards should equal the number of firms being visited) or a local publication.

We must have this information two weeks prior to the training sessions to prepare the Volunteer Visitor Packets. If we do not have this information two weeks before, we may have to postpone the sessions. The packets are individually compiled for each volunteer. The information in the packet tells the volunteer who his/her partner is and what firms will be visited. Also provided are surveys, industrial outlook reports about the firms to be visited, factsheets about the BR&E program to give to the firms, and a factsheet about conducting the interviews. (Forms for compiling lists of volunteer visitors and firms to be visited are provided at the end of this section).

Whether you want to send business cards or a local publication (item #6), is your decision. We have a pamphlet that briefly describes the BR&E program. The volunteers can leave this pamphlet with each firm after the interview. On the back panel of the pamphlet is a space for the Coordinators' business cards. If you want, we will (or you can just before the sessions) attach the card to the pamphlets and enclose them in the volunteer visitor packets. Giving the pamphlet to the firms establishes a connection between the program and them, and provides them with a contact should they need assistance.

Some communities prefer to produce their own pamphlet describing local services which the volunteers distribute to the firms. A sample local pamphlet is provided in this section. You decide whether you want the volunteers to distribute the BR&E pamphlet or the local publication, and send that information with the other items listed above.

## Creating Volunteer Teams and Assigning Firms

As a general rule, avoid all conflicts when pairing volunteers in teams and assigning firms. The Assistant Coordinator (with the help of the Coordinator, Consultant and Task Force) should reassign volunteers to other teams or change their firm assignments if the volunteers are uncomfortable with their initial assignments. If a volunteer, who is a businessperson, refuses to work with his/her assigned partner because his/her partner represents the bank which refused to approve his/her loan application, for example, the Assistant Coordinator should reassign these volunteers to new teams. Likewise, if a volunteer is assigned to visit an ex-employer, the Assistant Coordinator should reassign that volunteer's visits.

If at all possible, pair public officials with private sector people. The combination gives the firm the impression that this program is indeed community-wide, adding credibility to your effort. On the one hand, the private sector volunteer may be more sympathetic to the firm's opinions or concerns than the public official. On the other hand, the public official may have more knowledge of local organizations and state programs that can address the firm's concerns.

## Arrangements to be Made

Before scheduling the date of the training sessions, please call the BR&E staff member to discuss convenient dates. Once the date is confirmed with the BR&E staff member, the Assistant Coordinator and Consultant can begin preparing the information listed above. In addition to preparing and sending the above information to BR&E staff, the Coordinators and Consultant need to reserve a meeting room.

The equipment needed for the training, includes:

1. a television monitor;
2. a VHS (1/2") videotape machine;
3. an overhead projector; and
4. a screen.

## Scheduling the Training Sessions

The training sessions last about two hours and are offered at two different times during the day. As stated before, volunteers need to attend only one session. Usually (but not always), the sessions are held in the late afternoon and evening with time for dinner in between:

First training session	3:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Dinner	5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Second training session	7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Be sure to offer the volunteer visitors the choice of either session so they can attend the session which best fits their schedule. A sample letter to the volunteers appears in this section.



### Mailing Firm Letters

A few days before the training sessions, the Assistant Coordinator must mail letters with surveys to all the firms. (The BR&E staff does not provide these surveys; the Assistant Coordinator must produce them locally. The BR&E staff will provide surveys for the volunteer training sessions). The timing of this step is crucial to the success of your program. Sending these letters and surveys to firms just before the training sessions allows volunteers to schedule their visits soon after the training sessions. Having received a letter, the firms will be expecting the volunteers' calls. The more delay between the firm letters, the training sessions, and the volunteers' calls, the lower the participation rate of the firms, the lower the volunteers' enthusiasm, and the weaker your program. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of sending your letters with surveys to the firms a few days before the volunteer training. A sample letter asking for the firm's participation is provided in Section V.

### Holding the Training Sessions

A typical agenda for the sessions is presented in Figure VI-1. Each session begins with the Assistant Coordinator describing briefly the objectives of the BR&E program, explaining the importance of the volunteers to the program, and then introducing the key leaders (the Consultant, BR&E staff member, and Task Force members who are present).

The BR&E staff member then gives a bit more information about the program and presents a videotape which highlights the BR&E program. Then, the Volunteer Visitor Packets are distributed. The contents of the packets, including the survey, are reviewed. Each volunteer receives industrial outlook material for the firms he/she will be visiting. The BR&E staff, during the first session, and the Consultant, during the second one, discuss the importance of the industrial outlook material in their packets. While the outlooks do provide information on many retail sectors, the primary focus of the resource is on the industrial sectors. The volunteers are encouraged to read these brief outlooks to help them become more familiar with their firms. Following that discussion, the Assistant Coordinator announces the deadline for the visitors to complete their visits.

Figure VI-1

**TYPICAL TRAINING SESSION AGENDA**

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Person Responsible</u></b>	<b><u>Time</u></b>
Introduction	Assistant Coordinator	10 minutes
Videotape presentation of the Ohio Business BR&E Program	BR&E staff	30 minutes
Review of <u>U.S. Industrial Outlook</u>	BR&E staff or Consultant	10 minutes
Coffee break		10 minutes
Distribution of visitor packets	Assistant Coordinator and Consultant	10 minutes
Review of visitor packet contents	BR&E staff	40 minutes
Final Note: Deadline for visits	Assistant Coordinator	10 minutes



SAMPLE LETTER  
RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

Some volunteer  
Some organization  
Some address  
Some City, State Zip

Dear Volunteer:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the \_\_\_\_\_ Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) Program. As a volunteer visitor, you are a critical element in this project, sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_ local sponsor \_\_\_\_\_, and the Cooperative Extension Service. This program developed at OSU/OSUE is nationally-recognized as one of the best BR&E programs in the country.

The overall purpose of the BR&E program is to assist our existing establishments. To do this, we have asked local leaders, like yourself, to visit several firms with a survey to gather information about their needs, concerns, and opinions of \_\_\_\_\_ as a place to do business. This information will help us improve our local business climate to better meet the needs of our existing businesses and future businesses.

To tell you more about the program and your role in it, we are holding two training sessions for all \_\_\_\_\_ volunteers. You need to attend only one of these sessions which lasts two and one-half hours. These sessions are:

1. Place, date, and time of session 1
2. Place, date, and time of session 2

Please complete the enclosed response card (Assistant Coordinator, you'll have to design your own response card) and send it to me at your earliest convenience. If you are at all unsure about participating, please attend one of these sessions anyway. After the meeting you can make your decision.

We greatly appreciate your cooperation in this community-wide effort. Your participation as a volunteer is critical to the success of the program because we would be unable to implement this program without the help of our local leaders.

If you have questions about the program, please call me.

Sincerely,

BR&E Assistant Coordinator





LIST OF VOLUNTEER VISITORS

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

<u>Name of Volunteer</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Public Offices Held</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Name of Volunteer

Occupation

Public Offices Held

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## VOLUNTEER TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

Community \_\_\_\_\_

Assistant Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Team \_\_\_\_\_

Establishments to Visit

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_



## VOLUNTEER TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

Volunteer Team

Establishments to Visit

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

## C. VISITING LOCAL ESTABLISHMENTS

### Volunteer Visitors' Responsibility

Once the volunteers have attended a training session, they are responsible for conducting their visits. Volunteers have the following responsibilities:

1. meeting with their partners;
2. contacting their assigned firms within one week;
3. preparing for each visit;
4. conducting their interviews within two weeks; and
5. returning completed surveys to the Coordinator.

### Meeting with Their Partners

The volunteers need to meet with their partners to discuss convenient dates and times for their visits. The names, addresses, and phone numbers of each volunteer's partner are indicated on their packets to facilitate this meeting.

### Contacting Establishments Within One Week after Training

The visitors are responsible for calling each firm representative or contact person to schedule an appointment within one week after their training. Having received the survey and letter asking for his/her participation in the program, the representative will be expecting the volunteers' calls. The name, address, phone number, SIC code, and contact person for each firm is given in the visitor's packet.

Although a few firms will refuse to participate because they prefer not to have their answers recorded, refusals are rare. To decrease the chance of refusals, volunteers need to call their firms within one week, preferably within one or two days after training. The refusal rate increases as the time between the letter asking for participation and the volunteer's call lengthens.

### Preparing for the Visits

Before a visit, both volunteers in each team should read the industrial outlook material provided in their packets about the firm they will be visiting. Reading this two- or three-page summary is worthwhile because often the volunteers are unfamiliar with the industry of the firm they will be visiting. Reading the summary makes them better visitors because they are informed. They know the types of products and services this industry offers, they know whether it is declining, growing, or stagnating, and they know the degree to which foreign competition, protectionist policies, tax reform, raw material supplies, research and development, and labor costs affect their profits.

Knowing just a few facts about the industry of the firm they visit makes the volunteers more comfortable in conducting the interview. It also demonstrates to the firm that the community (via the volunteers) does care about its well-being. A sample industrial outlook is provided in Section IX. In addition to reading the industrial outlook material, the volunteers should review the survey questions for their own familiarity. Sample surveys are provided in Section IV. The volunteers should also be sure to bring with them to the interview the brochures that they are to give to the firm representative. Finally, the volunteers should confirm their appointment with the firm by telephone the day before the appointment. This is not only a courteous gesture but also a reminder of the visit to the firm.

### **Conducting the Interview within Two Weeks after Training**

Both volunteers should attend the interview. Having at least two representatives conduct the interview suggests greater community commitment to and concern for the growth of local businesses than if only one volunteer conducts the interview. Also, with two volunteers, one can ask the questions as the other records answers.

Furthermore, the volunteers need to explain to the firm representatives that the survey analysis aggregates the data to indicate trends, tendencies, or patterns in the overall local business community. Detection of a single business's answers is impossible.

At the beginning of the interview volunteers should:

1. introduce themselves;
2. briefly explain the purpose of the survey and the objectives of the BR&E program;
3. provide a survey for the representative of the firm if he/she does not have one;
4. reassure the representative that the surveys are confidential but that follow-up may be necessary;
5. explain that the representative does not have to answer questions that are objectionable; and
6. never promise any specific assistance - only state that the BR&E Task Force will follow-up with the firm.

After these points have been made to the firm representative, one of the volunteers should begin asking each question. Volunteers must read each question directly from the survey. Otherwise errors will occur. Memorizing questions is impossible because it is a long survey and paraphrasing questions may lead to inaccurate answers. As the representative answers the questions, the volunteers should feel free to probe; that is, to ask tangent or related questions. The more information the volunteers can gather during their visits, the more likely the Coordinators, Consultant, and Task Force members can assist these firms.

When the questioning has concluded, the volunteers should thank the representative, give him/her the necessary brochures, and explain that the results of the program will be announced at a community event in about six months.



### Completing Each Survey

Following the interview, the volunteer team should complete "Follow-up Suggestions" which appears on the last page of the survey. This one-page report indicates the immediate concerns of the firm, the types of information the representative requested, and the urgency of a follow-up meeting with this firm. This information serves two purposes. First, it forces the volunteer team to record its impressions of the interview while they are still fresh in their minds. Secondly, it notifies the Coordinators of items that need immediate attention. After completing "Follow-up Suggestions", the volunteer team should review the survey to ensure that all answers are complete, understandable, and legible.

Volunteers should return the completed survey and "Follow-up Suggestions" sheet to the Coordinator who then sends copies to the BR&E staff and Consultant. Since the survey's cover sheet reveals the name of the firm, it is removed from the questionnaire before copying.

### Setting the Deadline for Completing Visits

Volunteers are to make every effort to complete their interviews within two weeks of the training sessions. However, vacations, illness, and apathy have sometimes caused delays in completing the visitation phases of previous programs. To minimize these delays, we recommend that the Coordinators be accommodating, but also keep the pressure on to complete the interviews by the appointed deadline. To ensure timeliness, we recommend setting the deadline at two weeks. Given conflicts in scheduling interviews, no more than one month should be allowed to complete the visits. If a team cannot complete its visits, the firms should be reassigned (according to the reassignment policy adopted at the first Task Force meeting).

### Keeping a Record of the Visits

To prevent volunteers from procrastinating by not contacting their firms, the Assistant Coordinator should request each volunteer team to call him/her during the first week of visits and report the team's appointments. Or, the Assistant Coordinator can ask the teams to record their appointments on a post card which they can mail to the Assistant Coordinator's office.

Both methods put a little pressure on the volunteers to make their appointments immediately, and both give the Assistant Coordinator an early indication of the volunteers' progress in visiting the firms. If a team seems to be procrastinating, the Assistant Coordinator can reassign its firms to another team.





## Worksheet

### REVIEW OF ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR LOCAL FIRMS

Many economists believe that structural changes in our national and international economies may have greater impacts on our local economies than the best of local development programs. There is no question that competition is increasing, that natural resources are less important in terms of location, and employment in manufacturing is likely to continue to fall. The impact on a community, however, depends largely on its ability to understand the changes already underway and to adapt to them.

The economic outlook for your community depends heavily on the outlook of your existing industry. If firms employing your local labor force are facing difficult times during the next five years, your entire local economy will also suffer. While there might not be anything that the Task Force can do to reverse the declines in these firms, it is helpful to have an early warning.

For example, if you have a business that is producing a product that is losing market share rapidly, it is more likely that this business will close in the near future. What contingency plan should be undertaken if this happens? Will feasibility studies be needed to explore alternative uses of the facility and the labor force? Are employee stock options a possibility? Developing answers to these questions takes time. Building support for a program based on the answers takes time also. Communities that look at the economic outlook of their major firms are likely to foresee these problems and develop contingency plans better than those that get caught by surprise and lack the time to develop solutions.

The Task Force should answer the following questions when reviewing the outlooks for the major firms in your community:

1. How has employment shifted in your local economy relative to the state and nation? Will these trends continue or change? Why or why not?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Does the community have several major industries or firms in which employment is concentrated? Are these firms subject to supply and demand forces which might in the future affect their scale or location of operation?

3. What is the long-term outlook for firm (#1\_\_\_\_\_)?

3.a. What factors are leading to growth? What factors are leading to decline?

3.b. What are the implications for our community?

3.c. Should we do any contingency planning for business closures or establish an ad hoc committee to follow this particular firm?

4. What is the long-term outlook for firm (#2\_\_\_\_\_)?

4.a. What factors are leading to growth? What factors are leading to decline?

4.b. What are the implications for our community?

4.c. Should we do any contingency planning for business closures or establish an ad hoc committee to follow this particular firm?



# Computer Equipment and Software

*Shipments by the U.S. computer industry are expected to grow 8 percent in current dollars in 1993, following a 4 percent increase in 1992. The U.S. packaged software industry will continue to supply the lion's share of the world market. Revenues should grow by more than 10 percent, about the same as 1992.*

The computer equipment and software sectors span seven specific industries. The four computer equipment industries are electronic computers (SIC 3571), computer storage devices (SIC 3572), computer terminals (SIC 3575), and computer peripheral equipment, not elsewhere classified (SIC 3577). In computer software, the three industries are computer programming services (SIC 7371), prepackaged software (SIC 7372), and computer integrated systems design (SIC 7373).

Before reading this chapter, see "How to Get Most Out of This Book" on page 1. It will answer questions you may have concerning data collection procedures, forecasting methodology, the use of current and constant dollars, sources and references, and the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. For other topics related to the subject of this chapter, see chapters 15 (Electronic Components and Equipment), 25 (Information Services), and 28 (Telecommunications Services).

Electronic computers include digital computers of all sizes, as well as computer kits assembled by the purchaser. Com-

puter storage devices are such equipment as magnetic and optical disk drives and tape storage units. The category for computer terminals covers teleprinters. Computer peripherals are printers, plotters, graphics displays, and other input/output equipment. Parts and components for computers and peripherals are included, as appropriate, in each of the first four SIC industries. However, the Census Bureau has reclassified some parts, such as printed circuit boards and integrated microcircuits, originally reported in electronic computers, in their respective component industries since 1988.

During the first half of 1992, the U.S. computer equipment industry showed signs of emerging from the most prolonged and severe downturn in domestic demand in its history. Shipments grew strongly through June, and new orders rose 8 percent compared with no growth during the same period in 1991. The revenue results of many leading U.S. firms also showed a marked improvement. Mainframe, disk storage, and printer sales appeared to have rebounded, while workstation, portable PC, and local area network (LAN) equipment shipments continued to increase at a healthy rate. However, demand for minicomputers and desktop personal computers remained sluggish.

Domestic business purchases of computers rose 10 percent during the first quarter of 1992. Surveys of U.S. business spending plans conducted early in the year indicated that a large number of corporate information system directors were beginning to reinstate major computer hardware procurements previously deferred or canceled to relieve substantial pent-up demand for greater processing power. CSX Index, a

## Trends and Forecasts: Computers and Peripherals (SIC 3571, 3572, 3575, 3577)

(in millions of dollars except as noted)

Item	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991 <sup>1</sup>	1992 <sup>2</sup>	1993 <sup>3</sup>	Percent Change (1987-1993)					
								87-88	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93
Industry Data													
Value of shipments <sup>4</sup> .....	55,843	62,773	59,758	58,981	57,800	60,100	65,000	12.4	-4.8	-1.3	-2.0	4.0	8.2
Total employment (000).....	286	290	263	248	236	224	220	1.4	-9.3	-5.7	-4.8	-5.1	-1.8
Production workers (000).....	101	105	96.8	89.6	88.7	84.5	83.7	4.0	-7.8	-7.4	-1.0	-4.7	-0.9
Average hourly earnings (\$).....	10.47	10.93	11.68	11.72	12.35	12.47	—	4.4	6.9	0.3	5.4	1.0	—
Capital expenditures.....	2,020	2,213	2,148	1,993	—	—	—	9.6	-2.9	-7.2	—	—	—
Product Data													
Value of shipments <sup>5</sup> .....	48,801	53,230	54,891	52,628	51,600	53,700	58,000	9.1	3.1	-4.1	-2.0	4.1	8.0
Trade Data													
Value of imports.....	—	—	21,706	23,321	26,423	30,697	34,380	—	—	7.4	13.3	14.5	13.7
Value of exports.....	—	—	22,348	24,127	25,175	25,527	27,362	—	—	8.0	4.3	0.2	8.5

<sup>1</sup>Estimated, except exports and imports.

<sup>2</sup>Estimate.

<sup>3</sup>Forecast.

<sup>4</sup>Value of all products and services sold by establishments in the computers and peripherals industry.

<sup>5</sup>Value of products classified in the computers and peripherals industry produced by all industries.

NOTE: Census reclassified some parts for electronic computers (3571) to component industries (367) for 1988-1990.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census, International Trade Administration (ITA). Estimates and forecasts by ITA.



subsidiary of Computer Sciences Corp., found in its survey that the largest outlays as a percentage of total revenues would occur in the aerospace, electronics, insurance, and telecommunications services industries. Federal spending on computers increased 77 percent in fiscal 1992 to \$5.5 billion, led by major purchases at the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Justice, Treasury, and Transportation, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Product shipments were expected to rise 4 percent to about \$54 billion in 1992, provided the recovery in the U.S. economy continued. Other factors affecting shipments growth were intense price competition, particularly in personal computers, and a possible overall fall-off in overseas demand.

The U.S. computer equipment industry endured its fourth consecutive year of employment loss in 1992 as companies continued to restructure their operations in an effort to cut costs and improve efficiency. Total employment declined 5 percent to 224,000 workers due to layoffs, early retirement, and attrition. The majority of the 12,000 job losses occurred among computer systems manufacturers, such as Digital Equipment and IBM, which once again substantially reduced their work forces. Plant closings, increased use of automation by the industry, and the contracting out of the manufacturing of some high-volume products to foreign suppliers continued to depress U.S. production worker employment. The number of production workers fell 4.7 percent to 84,500, a much sharper decline than the 1 percent drop recorded in 1991.

According to *Workplace Trends* newsletter, the U.S. computer industry has been hit much harder by layoffs than defense, aerospace, and automobile manufacturers. U.S. computer firms laid off 191,729 workers worldwide between 1988 and early 1992. These reductions were initially confined to factory workers, and support and administration staffs, but eventually spread to researchers, engineers, engineering managers, and marketing executives.

Automation has become an important competitive tool for the industry, helping to raise productivity, lower costs, and bring products to market sooner than in the past. A survey by the Automation Forum shows that the U.S. computer industry's spending on automation reached \$1.7 billion in 1989, the latest year for which data is available, and was exceeded only by the automotive and aircraft/aerospace industries (Table 1). When measured in terms of investment per production worker, the industry ranked second among the top U.S. industries in its automation spending, with \$14,116 invested. Investment was concentrated in computer-assisted design (CAD), computer-assisted manufacturing (CAM), and computer-assisted engineering (CAE) hardware and software (31 percent), plant operations software (22), production equipment (20), and automatic materials handling equipment (18). U.S. computer firms have been particularly adept in using their own technologies to design and engineer new products which, in turn, have allowed them to considerably shorten time needed for product development. In manufacturing plants, they have turned to automated assembly equipment and systems, numerical and non-numerical controls, and robots to improve production processes.

Research and development (R&D) expenditures of a combined sample of 92 U.S. computer equipment suppliers were adversely affected by recession in 1991, rising only 5 percent to \$14 billion. Although continuing to devote a high percentage of total revenues to research, and surpassing in absolute

**Table 1: Top 10 U.S. Industries' Automation Investment, 1989**

(In millions of dollars except as noted)

Industry	Automation Investment	Share of Top 10
Automotive .....	6,316	19.2
Aircraft and aerospace .....	2,667	8.1
Computers and office equipment .....	1,731	5.3
Engines and construction machinery .....	1,708	5.2
Fabricated metal products .....	1,548	4.7
Appliances and consumer electronics .....	1,491	4.5
Paper and allied products .....	1,325	4.0
Communications and electronic components .....	1,324	4.0
Rubber and plastics products .....	1,243	3.8
All other chemicals (excluding bulk) .....	1,214	3.7
Other industries .....	12,313	37.5
Total automation investment .....	32,980	100.0

SOURCE: Automation Forum.

spending all other major industrial sectors in *Business Weeks'* annual "R&D Scoreboard" for 1991, the industry's growth rate fell below the composite increase of 7 percent for all industries. It lagged well behind increases for health care (16 percent), consumer products (11), and leisure-time products (10). Most of this slowdown was attributable to large-scale and mid-range computer systems firms. The lower spending of computer systems firms was not offset by substantial growth in the R&D budgets of many workstation and personal computer manufacturers.

Faced with escalating R&D costs and the need to perform research across a broad range of technologies, U.S. computer manufacturers have continued to form research alliances within the industry and with companies in other electronics sectors. General Electric, AT&T, Honeywell, and IBM established the Optoelectronic Technology Consortium in July 1992 to conduct research on advanced optical technology for 30 months. Backed by \$8 million in initial funding and matching support from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the group will study optical interconnection devices for high-speed data transmission in commercial and military image detection systems, high performance parallel processors, and telecommunications signal switching. The consortium's members will share research already completed in their own corporate laboratories, and will release results of joint efforts to other U.S. computer firms, semiconductor houses, aerospace companies, and government laboratories. Another effort—led by scientists at Conductus, Inc., a Sunnyvale, CA firm, and involving the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University, and several private sector concerns—will try to integrate optical technologies into a prototype computer that may lead to desktop supercomputers.

The Microelectronics and Computer Technology Corp. (MCC) has successfully developed new software tools, production and packaging technologies since its founding in 1982. Its next 10-year strategy, announced in early 1992, calls for the consortium to be involved in enabling technologies applications, and the creation of new standards for advanced materials, integrated circuits, device packaging, networking, and software. One major goal of its Enterprise Integration Division is development of a commercial information infrastructure (EINet) that will help member companies bring products and services to market with unprecedented speed, flexibility, and quality. The MCC has also begun a five-year project on holographic mass-storage







## **VII. FOLLOWING-UP ON SURVEY INFORMATION**

The success and effectiveness of an BR&E program depend largely on the thoroughness of the short-term and long-term follow-up. In this section, short-term follow-up work is discussed. In Section VIII, long-term follow-up, in the form of reviewing the survey findings and writing the strategic plan is described.

### **The Cooperative Nature of Follow-up Work**

Short-term follow-up work can be very tedious and time-consuming for the Coordinator if he/she tackles it alone. The best follow-up work is accomplished in a cooperative fashion. The Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator, Consultant, and the Task Force should all participate in the follow-up work. The Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator, Consultant, and Task Force, however, have different responsibilities with respect to follow-up work.

### **The Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator**

Although both the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator should work together as the returned questionnaires are reviewed, the Assistant Coordinator should take care of the day-to-day details of this task, e.g., insuring the completion of the visits and turning in the questionnaires as well as scheduling the review sessions with the Task Force members. The Assistant Coordinator then works with the Coordinator in the necessary follow-up work described below. In some cases, especially when the Consultant is a local person, all three, the Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator and Consultant, can divide the immediate follow-up tasks with the businesses among themselves as they see fit.

The Coordinators should review the surveys as the Volunteer Visitors return them. The Coordinator's role at this point is to address simple, short-term, or urgent follow-up work. If an establishment, for example, has requested information about local financing programs, the Coordinators can send it a brochure with such information.

If an establishment has indicated that it may relocate, the Coordinator must act immediately. In such a case, the Coordinator should contact the establishment to identify why it is considering moving. If the establishment is moving because its corporate headquarters has decided it will, there may be little the Coordinator can do to prevent this.

If, however, the move is prompted by local issues, such as zoning conflicts, no room for expansion, no financing available for expansion, the lack of skilled labor, or the lack of recreational opportunities, perhaps the Coordinator can make a difference. Although these issues are not easily solved, especially in the short-term, the Coordinator can begin addressing these concerns by contacting the local zoning board to discuss variances or by determining other sites in the community that may be available for the establishment's expansion. He/She can contact his/her Consultant to identify available state and federal programs for financing expansions and for training workers. He can meet with the Task Force to discuss long-term recommendations to improve recreation -- especially if this appears to be a common concern.



## The Consultant

The Consultant should also review the surveys as they are returned. The Consultant's job in terms of follow-up is to provide information (names, phone numbers, brochures) to firm's inquiring about nonlocal assistance, such as state and federal financing programs, labor/management committees, or export marketing strategies. Since the Consultant is an economic development professional he/she is responsible for knowing the appropriate organizations and offices that can assist these establishments. While the Coordinator can provide information about local assistance in the form of programs or agencies, the Consultant provides information about nonlocal assistance or concerns.

## The Task Force Meeting Series #3

After 10 to 15 surveys have been returned, the Task Force should begin Task Force Meeting Series #3 initially described in Section III. The purpose of this review is to identify ways that the BR&E program can provide assistance to each firm and to assign the responsibility to one or more of the Task Force members for working with each firm. Typically, it takes two or three or more meetings to complete this process of reviewing the surveys, depending on the number of interviews completed.

The process used for review is as follows:

1. The Assistant Coordinator runs an extra photocopy of the survey, but omits the coversheet with the firm name and the first page which includes the employment and products produced. If this information is not removed, the review process violates the confidentiality promised to each of the firms during the visits.
2. At the meeting, the Task Force is sub-divided into small groups of three people each. Each group reviews three surveys with each person in the group reading all three surveys. The small group then completes the "Follow-up Worksheet" that outlines the nature of the problem and suggested follow-up and the person that should be asked to handle this. (Copy of "Follow-up Worksheet" shown at the end of this section).
3. The entire Task Force reconvenes and the small groups report back. The full Task Force then either accepts or modifies the suggested ideas for follow-up.

This review process not only helps address the immediate problems of local firms but also helps local leaders understand the long-term major concerns of firms. These longer term problems are addressed formally after the data is fully tabulated by the BR&E staff. But the review of individual surveys gives the Task Force members a stronger grasp of the nature of these concerns. This makes it easier for them to use the 50 to 60 page report of results later in the process. It also gives them time to think about various options for handling the problems that firms mention.

### Agendas for Task Force Meeting

The meeting agendas for the Task Force during meeting series #3 include the previously discussed review and also some new information necessary for developing strategic local economic development plans. The suggested agendas are as follows:

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>Agenda &amp; Topic</u>	<u>Length</u>
1	1-2 Weeks after visits start	Review of Surveys Review of Secondary Data/ Employment Profile	90 min 30 min
2	1-2 Weeks later	Discussion of Follow-up Review of Surveys Outlook for Key Industries	30 min 60 min 30 min
3	1-2 Weeks later	Discussion of Follow-up Review of Surveys Outlook for Key Industries	30 min 60 min 30 min
4	1-2 weeks later	Discussion of Follow-up Review of State Programs	30 min 90 min

---

**Review of Secondary Data/Employment Profile** Trends in employment in the county/community, broken down by economic sectors, should be presented at this meeting. The information shared by the BR&E staff can provide the core data for the review. This data should compare the trends in the county/community to that of the state over the past 10 years. This data can help to point out how the county/community is similar to or different from the state.

**Discussion of Follow-up** In second and future meetings, it is desirable to spend a few minutes hearing reports from those responsible for handling the follow-up assignments from the earlier meetings. This encourages those responsible to move ahead and allows for changes in direction whenever desirable.

**Outlook for Key Industries (Industrial Programs)** A review of the economic outlook for the county's/community's key industries is an essential part of any early warning system for the community's manufacturing sector. This review should discuss the major trends in supply and demand factors that impact upon the industry. While every firm has unique elements, it operates in a national and international market that provides both opportunities and challenges.

A practical means of understanding the outlook of key industries is to review the U.S. Industrial Outlook for those industries and then discuss the information. A means of doing this is for each member of the Task Force to be given a photocopy of the 3 to 4 pages from the U.S. Industrial Outlook for 2 or 3 of



the major firms at the first meeting. Then one person should be asked to make a short (5 to 10 minute) presentation on highlights from this summary at the second meeting. The process should be repeated at the third meeting. The worksheet entitled "Review of Economic Outlook for Local Firms" at the end of Section VI can help the presenters organize their talks.

**Outlook for Retail/Tourism** A review of the economic outlook for the county's/community's key retail/tourism sectors is also an essential part of an early warning system for the community. This review should concern the major trends in retail/tourism employment for key sectors.

A practical means of understanding the outlook of key retail sectors is to review the U.S. Industrial Outlook for retail and then discuss it. A means of doing this is for each member of the Task Force to be given a photocopy of the 3 to 4 pages from the U.S. Industrial Outlook for retail. Then at each meeting one or more persons should be asked to make short (2 to 4 minute) presentations on highlights from this summary. The process should be repeated until the retail information has been covered. Task Force members should pay close attention to the chapter entitled "Retailing". The two major sections of the retailing chapter cover merchandise and food retailing. Other relevant sections include Transportation and Travel, Health Care, Financial Services, and Business and Professional Services. Finally, the pull factors for the county/community should be reviewed and discussed (see Section IX).

**Review of State Programs** By the fourth meeting, the survey results will suggest which state and/or federal programs are of greatest use. As a first step in deciding how to help firms use these programs more productively, the Consultant should provide basic information about these programs to the Task Force. If more detailed information is needed, the Task Force can invite representatives from the key programs to speak to them.

### **Examples of Follow-Up Work**

To make the process of follow-up less vague, specific examples of assistance are presented below. Based on previous programs, follow-up can take a variety of forms. The examples below identify several types of follow-up. These are:

1. providing information to establishments (firms) that requested it during the visits;
2. attracting new business development;
3. referring an establishment to a local or state government official for assistance; and
4. attempting to solve local problems adversely affecting an establishment's operation.

### **Fayette County: Providing Information**

In every program, the Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator, and Consultant has supplied information to those firms requesting it. This information is most often in the form of a factsheet or brochure, and less often in the form of a name and phone number. Several questions in each of the surveys (Industrial, Retail, Tourism) directly address types of information each establishment wants.

In Fayette County, an establishment requested information about the procedures it needed to follow to expand its facilities. The Coordinator sent the firm, which employed 47 people, information about obtaining a variance to get a building permit from the Ohio Industrial Relations Committee. Construction increased the warehouse and production areas, creating 15 jobs.

Bill Grunkemeyer  
Center for Economic Development  
101 E. East Street  
Washington Court House, OH 43160  
614/335-3525

### **City of Piqua: Attraction Efforts**

Since the completion of their 1989-90 program, the City of Piqua was able to attract the Berwick Steel Company. This attraction brings \$8 million in investment to the city and is expected to produce 55 new jobs over the next 3 years (1992-1995). A unique feature of this attraction effort is that three local firms cooperated and provided financial assistance to attract a business which complements their businesses.

According to Larry Baker, Executive Director of the Piqua Improvement Corp. and BR&E Program Alternate Coordinator, this attraction is the first "greenfield" or ground-up attraction for Piqua in the last six years, meaning location of the firm required building a new facility.

The attraction was a cooperative effort which included the extensive assistance of three local firms:

- a) A tube manufacturer identified alternative sites and encouraged the company to locate in Piqua (The company is a customer of Berwick)
- b) A fan company donated about 2 1/2 acres for street and rail spur construction which was done at no cost to Berwick
- c) An engineering firm sold the best 16 acres of a 40-acre site that they had for sale at a very favorable price to Berwick

Baker says Piqua's BR&E Program created an awareness of the importance of BR&E among the city's local businesses. All three of the firms were visited as part of the BR&E program and participated in the town meetings held with local govt officials, educators and business leaders to discuss community issues which evolved from the BR&E program.

As a result of the BR&E program, all three firms "recognized the spirit of community cooperation and listened to our story," says Baker.

Larry Baker  
City of Piqua BR&E Asst. Coordinator  
Executive Director, Piqua Improvement Corp.  
200 W. Ash Street  
Piqua, OH 45356  
513/776-8198



## **City of Greenville: Giving Referrals:**

A firm in the city of Greenfield currently employs 22 workers and produces specialty products such as plastic-covered, custom-colored boat anchors, ice scrapers for boats, tent stakes, and long-handled camping skillets.

When surveyed as part of the City of Greenfield 1988/89 BR&E Program, the firm expressed a number of problems, says Pam Royse, Greenfield City Development Director. "They needed a new building, and a new oven and the owner had died very recently. The owner's daughters took over the function of running the firm and it is currently managed by one of the daughters," says Royse. The City helped them by referring them to programs directed toward woman-owned businesses provided through the Ohio Department of Development. Specifically, the firm was referred to the Ohio Department of Development's Ohio Mini-Loan Program, a financing program targeted to minorities and women; and the Women's Business Resource Program, aimed at increasing the start-up and success of women-owned businesses. Accessing these programs enabled Greenfield Products to increase their efficiency and productivity and add additional employees.

Royse says the BR&E program helped the City to establish "a very good working rapport" with this firm which is on-going. "They are currently getting involved in foreign trade so we had the local ODOD Representative, Christy Spears talk, to her (owner)."

Pam Royse  
Greenfield City Development Director  
P.O. Box 300  
Greenfield, OH 45123  
513/981-7756

## **Mercer County**

### **1. Business Retained**

During the practice visit at White New Idea Farm Equipment Company, the task force members were interviewing the Director of Human Resources. During the interview the Director was called out. Then he told the task force members he had just received word that the company had sold one of its tractor lines and employment would be reduced by about 30 percent. When the sale was announced to the community there was concern that the firm would pull out completely. Although employment did decrease from about 450 employees to about 300 employees, the firm has been stabilized and there is no talk of it leaving.

## 2. Money Page in Local Newspaper

One of the volunteer visitors was on staff at the local newspaper, the Daily Standard, says Larry Stelzer. During the interview the firm representative said the community needed more positive coverage of business news. In addition, the program survey findings indicated a need for more positive reporting. As a result, the Daily Standard now has a money page which reports local businesses' successes, new business start-ups, and other upbeat business news.

## 3. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Library

Survey findings revealed that firms needed information regarding OSHA requirements. In response, the Mercer County Community Improvement Corporation established an OSHA library of resources to provide information regarding current regulation and compliance requirements. Stelzer says the initial resources cost about \$400 and are updated each year at a cost of about \$50. The resources are housed in the Court House and businesses can come in and copy information they need. Stelzer says a number of local businesses are using this service.

Larry Stelzer  
Community Development Department  
101 North Main Street  
Courthouse 104  
Celina, OH. 45822  
419/586-4209

### Organizing the Follow-up Work

To help the Coordinator keep a record of all follow-up work, he/she should use a follow-up worksheet for each establishment visited. An example of a worksheet, developed by Dale Hileman of Columbia Gas in Cambridge and Eric Norland of the Ohio Cooperative Extension Service, are shown at the end of this section. The designs of both worksheets are excellent because they identify the problem, assign specific follow-up action, and record the completion of follow-up in an organized, efficient, and confidential way.

### Writing Letters of Appreciation

To express the community's appreciation for the firm's participation in the program, the Coordinator should write a letter to each firm representative after the interview. A sample letter has been included at the end of this section.

### Sending Copies of the Surveys to the BR&E Staff

When the Coordinator receives 10 to 12 completed surveys from the volunteers, he/she should send copies to the BR&E staff. The BR&E staff will begin coding those surveys and entering the data in a computer. Before the BR&E staff can complete the data analysis on the survey information, the Coordinator must notify the BR&E staff that it has received all the surveys.



**SAMPLE LETTER  
THANKING THE ESTABLISHMENT FOR ITS PARTICIPATION**

John Jones  
President  
ABC Manufacturing Company  
City, Ohio 09999

Dear John:

Thank you for your time in participating in the \_\_\_\_\_ Business Retention and Expansion Program. You will be invited to our community meeting, where the strategic plan will be presented. At this time an executive summary of the survey results and the strategic plan will be available for you.

I very much appreciate the candid and thorough responses you gave to the survey questions. The results of the study will help our local and state government officials, educational organizations, and chambers of commerce understand your firm's needs. They will also provide a guideline for future planning and implementation of economic development strategies.

Again, thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to participate in this important project.

Sincerely,

BR&E Coordinator





# BR&E TASK FORCE FOLLOW-UP WORKSHEET AND/OR SUMMARY

Community Name \_\_\_\_\_

Survey ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Short range = 1  
Long range = 2

\_\_\_\_\_ Business is considering moving  
\_\_\_\_\_ Business is considering relocating

Q #	Date	SIC Code	SR = 1 LR = 2	Nature of Concern/Problem	Follow-up Assignment	Date Completed
				<u>LOCAL ISSUES</u>		
				<u>NONLOCAL ISSUES</u>		

BR&E TASK FORCE FOLLOW-UP WORKSHEET

FIRM ID

COMMUNITY

DATE OF VISIT

TODAY'S DATE

Questions That Need Follow-Up (Question #)	Nature of Concern	Follow-Up Assignment	Date Completed

**BR&E TASK FORCE FOLLOW-UP WORKSHEET**

**FIRM ID** \_\_\_\_\_ **COMMUNITY** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF VISIT** \_\_\_\_\_ **TODAY'S DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

Questions That Need Follow-Up (Question #)	Nature of Concern	Follow-Up Assignment	Date Completed







# Notes

## **VIII. STRATEGIC PLANNING WITH THE TASK FORCE**

### **Introduction**

In the previous section, short-term follow-up was discussed. In this section, long-term follow-up, in the context of reviewing the survey findings and strategic planning is explained. The process of writing recommendations for stimulating economic development in your community is one of strategic planning. To gain the support of the business community, the recommendations must lead to effective local programs that local firms see as beneficial. To achieve this goal your Task Force will need to understand the survey results, the overall employment profile and economic outlook of your community, and the community's resources, abilities, and values.

Section II outlined the Task Force meetings needed to complete the BR&E program. This section discusses the two Task Force meeting series that are necessary, based on the experiences from other programs, to develop an effective strategic plan. While some BR&E Task Forces have met less frequently than suggested below, they have not been as effective in implementing their recommendations as those that have met more often.

### **Strategic Planning Meetings**

These meetings are a part of the series of meetings discussed in Chapter II, Coordinators and the Task Force.

The two meetings series needed for the Task Force to write recommendations will require about six hours of time during an eight- to ten-week period. Some groups will wish to invest much more time than this in their community's future. These meetings include:

**Meeting #4: Data Review Meeting** (the draft report should be mailed to all Task Force members at least one week before this meeting) During this meeting, the BR&E staff member and Task Force review the draft report. A typical agenda appears in Figure VIII-1. Key findings and several economic development strategies are examined. Together, using a variation of the nominal group process, the Task Force identifies recommendations for future economic development of the community. The Task Force and a BR&E staff member classify recommendations under one of four core strategies.

**Meeting Series #5** (held two weeks to three weeks after Meeting #4). The Task Force is responsible for writing the final strategic plan. Usually, the Coordinators and the Consultant write the first draft of the strategic plan based on the results from the discussion of the draft report. Alternatively, a Task Force subcommittee can be designated to write the first draft of the strategic plan. During this meeting series, the draft of the strategic plan is reviewed and revised. It is preferable for the Task Force to meet and discuss the components of the strategic plan. However, drafts mailed to the Task Force members with written feedback can be used for some steps in the process of developing the strategic plan.



## **FIGURE VIII-1**

### **AGENDA**

#### **DRAFT REPORT REVIEW MEETING**

The draft report should be mailed to all Task Force members at least one week prior to the meeting

- I.       Introductions (Coordinator) (5-10 minutes)
  - a)       purpose of meeting
  - b)       introduction of Task Force members
  - c)       introduction of BR&E staff member
  
- II.       Review of Key Findings (BR&E staff member) (60 minutes)
  - a)       presentation of economic profile of community
  - b)       presentation of the key findings and their relation to local economic development strategies
  
- III.      Presentation of suggested strategies (BR&E staff member)(10 minutes)
  
- IV.      Selection of Strategies and Recommendations (BR&E staff member and Task Force) (60 minutes)
  - a)       a variation of the nominal group process is conducted by BR&E staff member (each Task Force member is asked to share 3-5 of the most important recommendations)
  - b)       recommendations classified into one of four core strategies of strategic plan
  
- V.       Designation of Writing Responsibilities (Task Force) (5 minutes)

## Information Sources for Developing Strategies

There are primarily three types of information necessary to develop the strategic plan.

### 1. Information from BR&E Surveys

In developing recommendations, the Task Force should focus on the problems and issues identified by the local firms through the BR&E surveys. This should be the primary source of information.

### 2. Information from Past Experience

Another source of information is to learn from past experience. The Task Force could compare previous experiences to current problems. Adjustments can then be made in the suggested recommendations to fit the needs of the current problems. However, caution must be taken to select the successful and appropriate solutions from past experiences, not the failures.

### 3. Information from Other Business BR&E Communities

Other communities that have participated in BR&E programs may have solutions to similar problems existing in your community. Ask the participants in those communities or the Cooperative Extension persons who have worked with them to learn how other communities have solved problems like yours.

## The Strategic Planning Process to Improve the Competitiveness of Local Firms

\* The strategic planning process is comprised of several steps:

1. conduct an evaluation to answer the question "How are we doing?"; identifying opportunities and concerns in the community
2. analyze external factors (e.g. political, social, economical and technological) to understand how those factors impact the community
3. critically analyze the various elements (type and delivery of services, concerns of businesses, condition of infrastructure, skills of labor force, etc.) of the community
4. analyze the implications of first three steps
5. develop strategic planning primary and secondary objectives into a strategic plan
6. implement strategic plan
7. monitor the implementation of strategic plan and analyze feedback

\* So, Frank "Strategic Planning: Reinventing the Wheel", Planning, February 1984, pp.16-21.

The goal of the strategic planning process is to build strong, effective public/private partnerships to address the challenges communities face and will continue to face in the future.

### **Suggested Strategies for BR&E Programs**

Past experience has demonstrated that recommendations or strategic actions of BR&E programs can be classified under four broad strategies. It is these four strategies which provide the areas of focus of the strategic plan to improve the competitiveness of local firms:

1. Disseminate information and conduct workshops/seminars.
2. Enhance the productivity and availability of the labor force.
3. Enhance the quality of life.
4. Initiatives for sustained economic development.

#### **Strategy One: Disseminate information and conduct workshops/seminars**

Many state and federal programs are aimed at helping firms become more competitive thus lowering their per unit costs. Many educational institutions offer workshops and short courses on management and marketing skills needed by local business owners or managers. There are a variety of steps which a community can undertake to help firms use these programs. First, circulating business newsletters can be purchased and reviewed to identify relevant topics germane to local businesses. Secondly, state and federal material concerning available programs can be adapted in a format better suited for local businesses, and dispensed to local businesses needing such information. Periodic economic development meetings along with local quarterly newsletters can help improve the dissemination of information. Inviting state and federal representatives to conduct workshops on available programs and resources are also methods of improving the flow of information between client and clientele. Workshops, seminars and special courses on key management or marketing tools can be organized through local educational institutions or The Cooperative Extension Service. The emphasis is on improving the businesses' awareness of resources, skills and programs that will make them more competitive.

#### **Strategy Two: Enhance the productivity and availability of the labor force**

The size and quality of the local labor force are frequently determining factors in the expansion of existing firms in a community. Likewise, the attraction of new firms depends heavily upon the availability and quality of skilled labor. Labor/management relations are also an important determinant in decisions to expand or to relocate to an area. Cooperation between local businesses and educational institutions is important in providing local labor with critical skills.

#### **Strategy Three: Enhance the quality of life**

A county's/community's quality of life refers to the quality of schools, recreational opportunities, public services, medical facilities, and other amenities that make the area a desirable place to live. As labor shortages become more common and recruiting skilled labor and professionals becomes more difficult, the quality of life will become more important. One company president said, "Many small companies could locate nearly anywhere in the country. But, if the company president finds your community a nice place to live, you'll probably get the company also."



#### **Strategy Four: Initiatives for sustained economic development**

National and international economic forces, such as the value of the dollar and interest rates, will have major impacts upon the health of the local economy. While county/community leaders cannot control these national and international forces, they can develop strategic plans to maximize the growth potential and can develop contingency plans which allow them to respond quickly to major business closings or other firm changes. Professional economic developers and continuing contact with local businesses are critical for sustained economic development.

#### **Selection of High Priority Recommendations: Using a Variation of the Nominal Group Process**

Two major resources are needed to implement the recommendations stemming from a BR&E program: money and local leadership. Both are generally bottlenecks. But frequently, especially in smaller communities, leadership time is the most severe bottleneck to new projects. Few communities can undertake new efforts on all of the suggested recommendations that are shown in the Appendix. Attempting to do too many new projects in a short period of time can lead to none of them being done well and many failures. Thus, it is necessary to set priorities.

In setting priorities, the Task Force must consider the survey results, their own experiences, and the experiences of other communities. They need to identify the advantages and disadvantages of each recommendation. Some of the factors to consider are:

- a. impact of the solution on the problem
- b. implications of the solution
- c. acceptability to the Task Force
- d. likelihood of repetition
- e. cost
- f. availability of federal, state, local financial and leadership resources
- g. quality of each program
- h. time required for implementation
- i. specific benefits

A variation of the nominal group process is a useful tool for setting priorities in a group that must consider a larger number of alternative ideas and recommendations. It includes the following steps at the first meeting described earlier.

1. After the presentation and discussion of the economic profile and summary data, the BR&E staff member gives an overview of suggested strategies and recommendations developed by the BR&E staff from the results found in the draft report. Each strategy along with the corresponding recommendations are discussed thoroughly as the justifications for the recommendations are explored. The members of the Task Force are given an opportunity to respond to the recommendations as they are being presented. (The draft report and the suggested recommendations should be mailed out to each task Force member at least a week before the draft report review so that they will be familiar with the information being discussed).



2. Once all of the suggested recommendations are presented, each Task Force member is given a sheet of paper and asked to write the 3-5 recommendations which he/she thinks are the most important to improve the competitiveness of local firms irrespective of strategy.
3. The Task Force reports its recommendations, each Task Force member reporting one recommendation at a time until all are reported. The BR&E staff member records the recommendations on a flip chart or overhead acetate, classifying them into one of the four strategies.
4. The group of recommendations under strategy one is then examined and discussed. The recommendations are prioritized, overlap is reduced, and a "sense of the Task Force" is determined for the "writing committee" (see Figure VIII.1, Step IV).
5. After discussion of the recommendations for the first strategy has ended, step 4 is repeated for the remaining three strategies.
6. Once all strategic areas have been discussed, the Task Force is given another final opportunity to respond to all of the recommendations listed for all four general strategies. The most important question is whether some critical action has been omitted.
7. The recorded recommendations are then given to the coordinator or other writing committee to write the draft strategic plan. At the next Task Force meeting, the members will discuss and revise a draft plan as outlined in meeting series #5.

### **Executive Summary and Final Report**

It is very important that data from the BR&E survey and the strategic plan be published and disseminated widely. The results are published in two formats: a full final report, typically running 70 to 100 pages long, and an executive summary, running 7 to 11 pages in length. The full report is distributed to the Task Force, Extension office, and local sponsor and other key offices (including the library). The executive summary is given to all that participate in the community meeting plus the visitors, the visited firms, and other community leaders.

The outline for writing the final report is discussed in Appendix A and a composite of strategy recommendations from past BR&E programs is located in the Appendix B. The executive summary contains an overview of the program, a summary of the key results and issues, and the complete strategic plan.

## **Appendix A: Writing Final Report**

The completed visitation survey forms are sent to BR&E staff where the findings are tabulated and analyzed and presented in the final report. The final report has four sections and they are:

- I. Introduction
- II. Employment and Payroll Profile
- III. Survey Results Related to Economic Strategic Planning
- IV. Strategy Recommendation

### **Outline**

#### **I. Introduction**

##### **A. Description of the BR&E Program**

The BR&E Program has three short-term and long-term objectives:

##### **Short-term Objectives**

- 1. Demonstrate Community's pro-business attitude
- 2. Develop a detailed data base about local establishments
- 3. Solve immediate/short-term problems

##### **Long-term Objectives**

- 1. Increase the competitiveness of local establishments
- 2. Develop a strategic plan for economic development
- 3. Continue Community's BR&E efforts

##### **B. The key players in the Program**

Five key players are:

- 1. the Certified BR&E Coordinator
- 2. the Certified BR&E Consultant
- 3. the BR&E Task Force
- 4. the Volunteers Visitors
- 5. the participating businesses

### C. Structure of the Program

There are nine main steps in the BR&E Program:

1. Obtain endorsements from local organizations supporting the Program
2. Complete the Certified Coordinator Training
3. Conduct two practice visits
4. Hold Volunteer Visitor orientation sessions
5. Conduct the official visits
6. Address problems and concerns expressed by establishments during the visits
7. Prepare the survey findings
8. Write recommendations, and
9. Present the report the community

### D. Final Report Overview

## II. Employment and Payroll Profile

The purpose of this section is to develop an overview of the county's employment status. What has happened to employment in total and in major sectors of the economy? In Ohio, we use data from the state Unemployment and Compensation Agency and County Business Patterns and present employment trends and covered payroll per employee of manufacturing, wholesale/retail, and service sectors, and compare employment changes in the county to the state.

## III. Survey Results

The main purpose of this section of the report is to determine the major issues of concern to the firms which were visited. We recommend that the survey results of the business visitations be presented and analyzed under four major areas:

1. Disseminate Information and conduct Workshops/Seminars
2. Enhance the Productivity and Availability of the labor force
3. Enhance the Quality of Life
4. Develop Initiatives for Sustained Economic Development

Most responses to questions fit easily under one of these headings. This section should end by identifying the major issues and positive features identified by the visited firms.

#### IV. Strategic Plan

Many communities develop the strategic plan using the four issue areas in III above. Others want a more flexible structure for presenting their strategic actions. The most critical requirement for each strategic action in the plan is that members of the Task Force consider it to be important and are willing to see that it is carried out. Appendix B contains examples of strategic actions adopted by communities as part of the their strategic plans.

Report appendices include Task Force, Volunteers Visitors, participating businesses, questionnaires, and tabulation of survey results.





## **Appendix B: Writing Strategy Recommendations**

The completed visitation survey forms are sent to BR&E staff where the findings are tabulated and analyzed. A draft report of the findings and suggested strategies for the strategic plan to improve the competitiveness of local firms are then sent to the local BR&E leaders. Strategies address primarily four broad aspects of community economic development: disseminate information and conduct workshops/seminars, enhance the productivity and availability of the labor force, enhance the quality of life, and develop initiatives for sustained economic development.

### **Composite Strategy Recommendations**

The strategy recommendations presented are a composite of the strategy recommendations produced from 73 of the individual Ohio BR&E programs completed to date since the Program's beginning in 1986. They primarily address the economic development needs reflected by firms in Ohio. Past programs have focused primarily on the manufacturing sectors. However, strategies adopted by the recent retail and tourism programs are incorporated in this compilation.

#### **STRATEGY ONE: Disseminate information and conduct workshops/seminars**

##### **RECOMMENDATION 1: Subscribe or Obtain One or More of the Following Publications:**

A. **Small Business Register**

The **Small Business Register** is a bi-monthly newsletter that lists all proposed new state regulations that impact on businesses. The subscription costs about \$35 per year. The BR&E Program or Chamber of Commerce could provide up-dates on items in this that relate to local firms.

B. **State Chamber of Commerce Newsletter**

C. **State Department of Development Newsletter**

D. **Obtain Pamphlets and Brochures about State Programs to be Distributed to Firms**

These include information on international trade ventures, marketing, etc.

## **RECOMMENDATION 2: Develop Local Publication(s)**

### **A. Develop Localized Fact Sheet on State and Federal Programs**

Local firms' competitiveness can be enhanced by use of state and federal programs. Firms expressed particular interest in programs aimed at labor training, marketing strategies and financing programs.

The state's fact sheets list state contacts rather than the local contacts that are most likely to work with the firms. Adaptation of the state materials to the county can save firms time and demonstrates greater local interest in existing firms.

### **B. Develop Quarterly Newsletter on Economic Development**

Newsletters provide an inexpensive means of making contact with a large number of firms and providing information on a wide variety of programs. Fact sheets, need to be periodically up-dated. The newsletter can do this and can also report on success stories and announce up-coming economic development events. While the financial costs of this approach are low, it does require some staff time.

Newsletter sources can include:

- financial assistance available for expansion, new equipment, etc. from federal, state, and local resources.
- information on international trade.
- information on programs offered through local educational institutions, including management seminars, training courses, etc.
- available counseling assistance through contact with volunteers with areas of expertise in small business.
- local progress in economic development initiatives.
- up-coming local or regional economic development events.
- a bibliography of available resources.
- success stories.
- a listing of local, state and federal resource people and programs available to assist with labor training, new technological innovations, management, marketing, and so on.

C. **Feature Articles in Newspapers Regarding Local Firms**

A series of feature articles should be written for local newspapers about existing businesses and their product lines.

D. **Develop and Distribute Guidelines Dealing with Zoning, Building and Other Regulatory Permits**

This should be done to assist expanding and relocating businesses. Adequately zoned areas for commercial and industrial use are necessary for planning effective business development as well as for contributing to the maintenance of high standards in the quality of life of the community.

**RECOMMENDATION 3: Hold Meetings**

A. **Monthly Meetings of County Development Practitioners**

Effective economic development is a team effort. Team work requires both an understanding of the goals and objectives of other agencies' programs and trust in their staff. The economic development of these linkages requires interaction among the economic development practitioners in state, federal and local agencies working on economic development. Some counties have used monthly breakfasts with brief programs on each agency to achieve this.

B. **Quarterly Meetings of Business Executives**

Chief executives have an opportunity to meet and share their concerns and interests, such as wage rates, technological innovations and expansion of local markets. Recall that a number of firms reported that they felt it would be possible for some of their raw materials to be produced within the county. These quarterly meetings can help executives become more aware of the capabilities of other firms in the county and expand the internal markets. Usually, there is a speaker but the primary benefits is the informal exchange among the participants.

C. **Economic Development Practitioners' Breakfast**

Teamwork is critical in economic development. Although there are many related local development programs and organizations, "turf battles" can prevent professionals from collaborating closely which adversely affects economic development in the community. To build cooperation among these groups, one community has invited all economic development practitioners in the community to meet regularly for breakfast. At each session, a representative from a development agency describes his/her program in depth while the others provide very brief updates of their programs. This approach has stimulated strong collaborative efforts for economic development within the community. As a result, development efforts are neither duplicated or repetitive, and firms save time by knowing the differences among programs.



#### **RECOMMENDATION 4: Conduct and/or Sponsor Seminar(s)**

##### **A. Sponsor Economic Development Seminars**

This approach is very practical if only a few firms request information on a particular topic or if a few firms want different kinds of information, since it would be impractical to hold a seminar for such a small group.

The primary advantages of this approach are: (1) it is possible to schedule the state resource people much more quickly because they do not need to travel to the community, (2) questions on the programs can be handled immediately, (3) the viewers get to see the state representatives as well as talk directly with them, (4) there are no major arrangement requirements as when a seminar is planned with an outside speaker. In fact, if there is only one firm, this is okay while a seminar requires the local organizer to ensure that enough firms come so as not to waste time for the state official.

Emphasis can also be given to identifying seminars and workshops currently available to businesses and developing new seminars and workshops to meet the community's needs. Educational seminars on such topics as small business management, loan application preparation, marketing analysis, and employee recruitment are examples of relevant topics of interest for businesses. A committee can be developed to organize instructional programs/workshops to provide businesses with information in which they express an interest.

##### **B. Conduct Information Workshops**

Quarterly forum/training sessions on specific topics, such as marketing, management, and labor relations can be held.

##### **C. Hold Entrepreneur Seminars to Assist Development of Facilities**

Local investors should be made aware of companies' needs in terms of recreational opportunities, needed housing, etc. with the intent of persuading them to provide the needed facilities, services, etc.

##### **D. Hold a Government Procurement Seminar**

Look into providing Government Procurement Assistance to industry through the local community development office or through support of a multi-county effort.

##### **E. Develop a Business Resource Committee to Enhance Management and Marketing Capabilities of Local Firms**

Local firms' competitiveness can be enhanced by improved skills in management and marketing, for example. This committee should be made up of all the business resource providers and economic development practitioners. The committee should meet and review program offerings to adequately meet these needs.

## **RECOMMENDATION 5: Establish a Committee**

### **A. Ombudsman Committee for Business Concerns**

Review input costs which firms say will have the greatest effect upon their future profits as indicated in the Final Report. Then do a comparative analysis of how these factors locally compare with neighboring counties or states. Such a comparison is useful in marketing the community's strengths, combating partial or incorrect information, and countering future cost-increasing efforts.

### **B. Export Marketing Committee**

An export marketing committee could help firms find foreign markets for their products and could provide a local support network of businesses currently involved in exporting to help new firms enter foreign markets.

### **C. Manufacturers' Council**

The purpose of the Manufacturers Council serves to keep local industrial management in direct communication with each other, the community, and the governmental and economic agencies that directly affect business. State and federal programs can be shared as reported in the Small Business Register.

### **D. Assign a Sub-Committee of Chamber of Commerce to Address Industrial Needs**

### **E. Appoint a Committee to Study the Effects of Utility Costs on Business**

## **RECOMMENDATION 6: Create an Input Producers-Purchasers Network**

Create a network matching local suppliers with industries which purchase those supplies. The types of raw materials and firms using those materials are identified in the report. The network could be created by either:

- a) forming a committee of local industrial purchasing managers who would meet regularly;
- b) using the Ohio Technology Transfer Organization's computer network to list local suppliers and purchasers, thereby marketing the community's businesses within the region;
- c) encouraging and developing local trade shows to showcase goods and services of local companies;
- d) organize quarterly meetings of local purchasing managers to provide a forum for improved purchasing practices, reduced transportation costs, and local sources of supply;

- e) conduct follow-up survey to the BR&E survey to identify specific inputs needed and match buyers with local sources.

**RECOMMENDATION 7: Develop a Network of Volunteers to Assist in Dealing with Government Programs**

Organize a service corps of retired executives to help in providing assistance to local firms.

**RECOMMENDATION 8: Follow-up on Requests for Information**

In conducting the survey, firms indicate programs they would like more information on and are usually mailed information as requested, but additional follow-up is necessary. An Economic Development Practitioners' Breakfast, and an Industry Newsletter can provide additional information to firms. In addition, a volunteer advisory group could serve local industry by dealing with specific problems on an individualized basis. The effort is particularly important to small- and medium-sized firms which have a difficult time keeping informed of available public programs.

**RECOMMENDATION 9: Inform Politicians and Agencies of Business Concerns**

Criticisms of state and local services and agencies, as presented in the Final Report findings, should be relayed to appropriate officials.

**RECOMMENDATION 10: Industrial Awareness Day**

Establish an Industrial Awareness Day to encourage a greater awareness of firms and the products and services produced locally.

**RECOMMENDATION 11: Communicate with Area Businesses Routinely**

The Task Force recognizes a need to remain informed regarding area businesses' needs and attitudes. This could be accomplished through the area business council. It is suggested that the Businesses' Council be strengthened through:

- 1) Organizational support by professional staff such as the sponsoring agency,;
- 2) Including representatives from County Practitioners Group at council meetings.



#### **RECOMMENDATION 12: Identify a Local Organization to Serve as a Resource Clearing House**

A local organization, such as the local chamber of commerce or private industry council, can be a clearing house for information about business programs and resources. This organization would have information about various programs available and refer firms to these programs. This organization may also be able to accommodate Recommendation 13, below.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 13: Provide Office Space for Circuit Riders**

In many cases, face-to-face contact between firms and regional representatives is necessary before firms participate in these programs. One county has provided an employment office with a telephone for representatives of state programs who are willing to schedule a half-day per week in the county to work with firms. This office can be used also by representatives of firms considering locating in the community.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 14: Establish a Video Library**

A video library will be established at the chamber of commerce which will include videotapes describing various state and federal business assistance programs. For businesses needing program information, a viewing of the video followed by an interactive telephone conference with a program representative will be arranged. If there is sufficient interest, a program representative will be brought to the community to make a presentation or to personally visit businesses. Presentations may be incorporated into other business meetings or functions.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 15: Establish a One-Stop Permit Center**

Since expansion is often an infrequent experience for most firms, they usually are not familiar with the process and permits required. In addition, participation in some state and federal programs require regulatory permits.

Providing a clearing house source for this information can assist firms during the planning phase of expansion could avoid possible delays in completing the project and in meeting production schedules. A permit center could also assist relocating businesses and help in educating the community about permits.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 16: Develop a Directory of the Products and Services Produced or Available in the Community**

Information for a product and service directory could be obtained through a county-wide survey under the auspices of the chamber of commerce. The directory would be a means for firms to find products and services that are locally available.



### **RECOMMENDATION 17: Promote Shared Advertising Among Local Retail Businesses**

Cooperative advertising is an effective method to market on a local and regional level. Businesses can work collectively to sponsor special events and promotions, and reduce the individual business cost for advertising.

## **STRATEGY TWO: Enhance the productivity and availability of the labor force**

### **RECOMMENDATION 1: Inform Firms of Available Programs**

#### **A. Identify Labor Training Programs**

Labor training programs were the first most frequently mentioned item on which firms wanted additional information. In addition, low labor skills and high labor training costs were some of the most frequently given reasons for firms' labor recruiting problems.

#### **B. Produce a Fact Sheet**

Produce a single document for marketing all vocational training available in the county. This tool will inform local businesses of the complete array of training opportunities available in the county. It can also be used for recruiting new businesses. Cost for this marketing tool could be borne by local education agencies and the local CIC.

Local firms could also be informed about state-wide labor training programs designed to improve skills, labor/management relations and competitiveness. These programs include the Ohio Industrial Training Program within the Ohio Department of Development, the Job Training Partnership Act from the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, the Training Linkage Service from the Ohio Board of Regents, and the Veteran's Job Training Act from Ohio Bureau of Employment Services.

#### **C. Ask Local Labor Training Programs to Give Seminars**

A small ad hoc committee should meet with a small group of skilled and professional/management employees to determine those local factors which are attractive or unattractive to these groups and to identify possible means of attracting more of these types of employees.

Local vocational educators should develop a unified public presentation and address groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, personnel associations and other employer groups.

## **RECOMMENDATION 2: Establish a Committee**

### **A. Establish a Blue Ribbon Committee on Labor Recruiting and Training**

The Committee would:

- 1) Identify labor needs
- 2) Present information to JVS, OITP, OBES, etc.
- 3) Sponsor labor training seminars for firms

The committee should identify the skills for which local industries and businesses are searching and then report these findings to vocational schools, college, and universities to help stimulate curriculum modifications. This can be accomplished through a comprehensive labor survey, with which area schools may be able to assist. In addition to making long-term progress by changing curriculum, short-term progress can be made by identifying workshops, seminars, and, possibly, in-house training programs to meet industry needs. These needs can also be communicated to central organizations such as TRACES, OTTO, and other job training programs.

This same committee should inform local businesses of state-wide labor training programs designed to improve skills, labor/management relations, and competitiveness. This can be accomplished through the Chamber newsletter. These programs include, for example, the Ohio Industrial Training Program from the Department of Development; the Job Training Partnership Act, and Veterans Job Training Act, from the state unemployment compensation agency.

### **B. Establish an Area-wide Labor/Management Committee**

While labor/management relations appeared healthy at the time of the survey, it is essential to have an institutional means of ensuring continued good relationships. The area-wide labor/management committee (ALMC) provides this means.

To evaluate the type of area-wide labor/management committee which would be most useful for the county, an ad hoc committee should be established to study the issues involved with a program of this kind. The committee can visit with leaders who have recently established new programs.

### **C. Establish a Business/Education Partnership**

The partnership should include representatives from various educational institutions or levels where a problems exists. For example, a community with concerns regarding high-school and post secondary education may form a group consisting of representatives from a local business group, the academic steering committee of the county board of education, the education committee in the chamber of commerce, the county superintendent's office, the high school(s) and vocational school(s), and the local community improvement corporation.

This group would be responsible for making recommendations on:

- (1) identification of skills needed in business and industry,
- (2) types of training needed to develop or improve those skills in workers,
- (3) the education level which can best provide the desired training (e.g. high school, J.V.S., pre-employment training, on-the-job training, retraining for specific job, etc.),
- (4) types of training that could be done at each education level; and
- (5) determine who will be responsible for conducting programs at each level (course development, funding, etc.)

**D. Educate Youth Regarding Hiring Needs of Community**

Plan educational experiences to familiarize students with vocational career opportunities and training expectations. Holding a Career Day Program would be beneficial.

**E. Establish a Hosting Network for Families of Skilled or Professional Workers**

Community strengths, such as excellent schools or low crime rates, are often not readily apparent to visitors who may just be in the community to interview for a job. For this reason, a hosting group should provide this information to prospective employees families by means such as guided tours around town. In addition, a brochure stressing the positive quality-of-life factors identified through the BR&E survey would be useful in promoting the community. An information meeting of hosting groups, such as real estate agents and personnel managers, should be conducted each year.

**RECOMMENDATION 3: Focus on Labor Skill Needs**

A committee or local group could focus on labor skill needs to reduce recruiting problems and ensure an adequate supply of labor. To achieve these goals the group could proceed by: (1) asking firms that reported problems in recruiting to describe these more fully and then reporting these findings to appropriate vocational schools and college/universities to help stimulate curriculum modifications; (2) learning about state and federal programs on recruiting and labor training; and (3) identifying communities (of roughly the same size) with outstanding programs in recruiting and labor training and then visiting with them to review the nature of their programs.

**RECOMMENDATION 4: Advertise Cooperatively for Labor of Specified Skills**

Firms can advertise cooperatively for needed employees, especially where several businesses need labor of similar skills.



**RECOMMENDATION 5: Monitor State Unemployment Compensation Agency Statistics for the County and Use Mail Survey to Supplement this Information with Local Information**

The BR&E Task Force should identify the skills for which local industry is searching and monitor Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for the county's labor force. A mail survey could be used to supplement the BLS data to determine the number of rural people who might be available for employment.

**RECOMMENDATION 6: Highlight the True Labor/Management Relations Picture in the County**

BR&E program findings regarding the effect of wage rates on future profits, labor costs and employee productivity and attitudes should be considered to present an overview of the labor/management relations picture for the county.

**RECOMMENDATION 7: Conduct a Wage/Benefit Survey**

Develop or update a complete wage/labor survey for use by existing firms as well as firms considering moving to the county. In order for existing firms to expand, and in order to help prospective firms evaluate the local labor climate, a wage/benefit survey is a useful tool. New firms generally use such information to determine whether or not they would compete profitably in the area.

**Recommendation 8: Examine Alternatives for Affordable Health Benefits to Small Business**

Many small businesses surveyed during past BR&E programs do not provide benefit packages to their employees, especially many of the businesses employing less than ten employees. A committee can be developed to examine ways to improve benefit packages provided to employees of small businesses.

The committee can identify affordable ways to provide health care benefits to employees. One such example is the formation of a health plan cooperative which allows businesses to pool insurance cost to provide benefits at a lower rate.

**STRATEGY THREE: Enhance the Quality of Life**

**RECOMMENDATION 1: Publicize Community Strengths**

Opinions about the quality of life in a community are largely based upon perceptions. By informing firms about your county's schools, recreational opportunities, and public services, perceptions will likely improve. A newsletter or brochure informing firms of the locational strengths/advantages in your community can also be used as a marketing tool in helping firms recruit employees and in attracting new employers.



## **RECOMMENDATION 2: Establish a Committee**

### **A. Establish a Business/School Partnership Program**

To understand this and to strengthen the dialogue between the schools and local businesses, a Business/School Partnership Program should be established.

The first step in the process might involve the school superintendent meeting with representatives from firms that rated the schools as fair or poor. Then, the ad hoc committee might visit communities that have recently started business/school partnerships.

### **B. Establish an Ad Hoc Committee to Study Recreational Opportunities**

An ad hoc committee can study the options available for increasing the availability and/or development of recreational opportunities.

### **C. Establish an Ad Hoc Committee on Highways and Transportation**

As a follow-up, this ad hoc committee of two or three members of the Task Force could invite firms with these concerns to a meeting to elaborate on their needs. The ad hoc committee should also invite those officials responsible for highway, airport and public transportation programs to the meeting to explain plans which might already be underway.

### **D. Establish a Beautification Committee**

A committee could explore means of targeting beautification projects and buildings to be rehabilitated, identify sources of funding, and establish project priorities.

### **E. Establish a Committee to Work on Waste Disposal/Other Problems**

The local community development organization should identify the extent of the problem, monitor the progress being made in solving the problem, provide input into the decision-making process as needed, and provide local industry with regular updates on its progress in solving the particular problem.

## **RECOMMENDATION 3: Conduct a Comparison Study**

### **A. Tax/Expenditure Comparison Studies**

A study could be done comparing and contrasting tax rates in relation to the quality and quantity of publicly provided services funded by taxes. This study should compare and contrast city/county/state tax rates with those of other cities/counties/states.

A second component of this study could be a comparison of the taxes for a sample of local industries in the county versus taxes for similar industries in a neighboring county, state, etc. The Ohio Data Users Center could be asked to provide comparative estimates of taxes for six major manufacturing firms.

**B. Cost Comparison Studies**

Do a study to compare and contrast costs of doing business (transport, energy, land and building costs, in addition to state and local taxes) in the county with costs and tax rates in other counties and the state. Publicize positive findings to market the community.

A second component of this study could be a comparison of the taxes for similar industries in neighboring states.

The Ohio Data Users Center might be asked to develop a comparison study for the county, neighboring counties, the state and neighboring states' tax rates, labor rates, and utility rates.

**RECOMMENDATION 4: Follow-Up with Firms on What Types of Recreational Opportunities are Needed**

**RECOMMENDATION 5: Invite Local/Regional Builders to Discuss Perceived Housing Needs/Sponsor Executive Housing Workshop**

The BR&E Task Force should invite a panel of local firm representatives to speak about housing issues. A panel of local builders, bankers, and firms should also be invited to express its observations and recommendations to meet housing needs.

Topics could include assessing local housing concerns and issues; for example, types and availability of various income levels; special needs for target groups such as the elderly; rentals; funding; etc. The intended audience could include realtors, contractors, bankers, local government officials working with state and federal housing programs, and property owners. This group could also have input into the design of the program. Prior to the workshop, a brief survey could be completed to determine the existing situation and to estimate housing needs. However, it is anticipated that the workshop would help to clarify this information.

**RECOMMENDATION 6: Rehabilitate the Downtown Area**

A particular community's quality-of-life is enhanced by a vibrant downtown area. In order to attract people to the area for shopping, recreation and cultural activities, several possible actions include:

- A.** Examine alternative strategies for enhancing shopping attractions in the downtown area through new or expanded businesses and exterior beautification programs.

- B. Assess current parking conditions, provide additional downtown parking if necessary, and implement parking plans.
- C. If a publicly-owned parking facility is constructed, we recommend increased parking charges to pay for this additional parking.
- D. The area around the courthouse can be used for a farmers' market, and recreational and ~~and~~ activities.
- E. A study could be implemented to evaluate recreational opportunities in the downtown area and all reasonable efforts made to encourage rehabilitation of recreational opportunities.

**RECOMMENDATION 7: Work with Local Planning Organizations to Ensure Effective Planning**

Work with local planning groups and share BR&E findings to ensure that annexation, zoning, and facility plans are effective in meeting community needs.

**RECOMMENDATION 8: Explore Possibilities Concerning Traffic Routes**

Officials responsible for highway and transportation programs should be invited by an ad hoc committee to a meeting with concerned businesses to elaborate on their needs and to give community officials an opportunity to present their programs. A feasibility study concerning the possibility of a tax increase earmarked specifically for street repairs and improvements should be conducted.

**RECOMMENDATION 9: Establish a Utility Liaison Committee**

This committee would contact those firms which expressed strong concerns regarding utility services. The committee would also be in contact with the utility company serving these firms to determine if anything could be done to reduce cost.

**RECOMMENDATION 10: Organize Networking and Present Program Concerning Health and Hospital Costs**

The spiraling cost to provide health and hospital care for employees is becoming a major concern of many of the firms interviewed.

The CEO Roundtable which meets monthly under auspices of the Chamber of Commerce would invite speakers from health and hospital organizations to review the cause and possible solutions to the rising costs. Firms within the county would also be invited to share and discuss any steps they have taken to offset or reduce health and hospital insurance costs.



### **RECOMMENDATION 11: Coordinate Local Efforts with Regional and State-Wide Organizations to Change State and Agency Policies**

The BR&E Task Force, along with the Legislative Committee of the county chamber of commerce, would contact such organizations as the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and the Ohio Expenditure Council to get an update on steps that have been taken or are planned to initiate changes within the system regarding state programs/ agencies/policies with which firms expressed dissatisfaction. Obtaining and/or giving support to these organizations will have a far greater impact than unilateral efforts.

## **STRATEGY FOUR: Initiatives for sustained economic development**

### **RECOMMENDATION 1: Continue the BR&E Task Force**

Even if the problems mentioned with public services are fully addressed, next year there will be new concerns. The BR&E Task Force provides a multi-agency approach to identification of these problems. Since the Task Force is a confidential setting, it allows local leaders to explore the nature of the problems and alternative solutions more freely.

When necessary, the Task Force should establish small ad hoc committees to study a particular problem in-depth.

The BR&E survey process can be continued on two levels. Firms already surveyed can be contacted again on an annual basis. In addition, it is recommended that an abbreviated survey form be developed and used as a means of re-contact with the firms over the next two or three years. A full survey, similar to the one just conducted, should be repeated every four or five years.

Similar visitation programs focusing on other sectors could be conducted. This survey should concentrate on service and manufacturing firms that complement each other.

### **RECOMMENDATION 2: Organize an Economic Development Forum or Ad Hoc Economic Development Council**

Sources of information: Local college, U.S. Industrial Outlook, local data.

The needs and problems of local firms are continuous, not cyclical. They may also be all-encompassing. There will be a need for a leadership forum that cuts across private/public lines, that includes the major local economic development organizations, and that includes all levels of education. A BR&E program is only as effective as its follow-up action.

Local problems identified in the Final Report should be addressed by an active coalition of economic development organizations with staffing resources to solve these problems.



It is recommended that the Economic Development Council develop subcommittees to address local industry needs, establish a regular meeting schedule, and assign follow-up as necessary.

This council should be comprised of local business and political leaders who will provide the public and private resources (financial and human) necessary for implementing the strategic plans.

The overall goals of the Council should be as follows:

- a) To examine the critical issues affecting the short- and long-term stability of the local economy;
- b) To study the economic outlook of local firms;

The council could start this study by reviewing and discussing the U.S. Industrial Outlook for the major industries in the community. Following this, they might use some of the trade journals cited in this reference for in-depth understanding of the industry. They could also invite speakers, either from the local industries or from state universities, to their meetings to discuss the outlook for specific industries.

- c) To develop contingency plans for the contraction/closure of local firms;  
After studying the economic outlook of local firms (above/b), the council could develop contingency plans for the contraction/closure of local firms should they occur.
- d) To serve as an advisory group on economic revitalization to the local decision makers;
- e) To explore potential funding sources for future economic efforts;
- f) To continue the work started by the BR&E Task Force;
- g) To be an unbiased resource ready to provide leadership in carrying out the BR&E Task Force recommendations presented in the BR&E Final Report.
- f) To study macroeconomic trends;

A local development plan which ignores the macroeconomic trends and international forces cannot succeed. The Task Force should review the major changes in recent years in the structure of both the national and international economy.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3: Employ the Services of a Full-Time Economic Development Professional**

To coordinate and provide expertise for a total economic development effort, an economic development professional should be hired. This individual would coordinate all economic development efforts in the community. Development efforts would include retention and expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of new firms. This professional would work closely with all other groups which are also working on economic development.

To implement this strategy, different arrangements for securing such a professional should be evaluated. Contact should be made with counties of similar size that currently employ such a person, to determine

the options and benefits of different arrangements. Other counties employ economic development professionals as Cooperative Extension Agents, Chamber of Commerce Executives, Community Improvement Corporation Executives or Planning Commission Directors.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4: Investigate Potential Growth Along Transportation Corridors**

Statistics have shown that commercial and industrial growth frequently occurs along heavy transportation corridors. These corridors should be identified and possibilities for development should be explored.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 5: Promote Development of Industrial Sites**

To help ensure that firms wishing to expand have adequate, developed sites available to do so, an industrial site or park might be developed. The local economic development group should consider the options as well as the benefits and costs involved with establishing planned industrial sites.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 6: Identify Resources Available for Economic Development, Including Land**

##### **a) Identify Fast-Growth Firms; Maintain Inventory/Directory of Property and Facilities**

A mini-survey should be conducted to identify fast-growing industries which could be running out of space at their current location or may be land-locked. It is recommended that a complete inventory of available properties and buildings be maintained and available to industry.

##### **b) Establish an Intervention Program for Firms in Transition**

The mini-survey should also address certain growth factors, in a discrete manner, that involve those industries identified with declining or zero growth rates. It is recommended that an intervention program be established that will provide assistance to those firms desiring to expand into other fields in an effort to boost stabilization and eventual growth through appropriate referrals.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 7: Form a Committee to Deal with Firms Wishing to Expand**

A committee should be formed to assist firms which indicated during the survey that they would like to expand. This committee can help in solving problems and locating resources such as sites, funding, etc.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 8: Develop a Contingency Plan for Business Closures**

1. Form a large support group and extract a small working committee.
2. Try to reverse the decision of the current employer to close the plant.
3. Survey assets on two levels:
  - a. As a plant doing the same type of business.
  - b. As a plant doing similar work.
4. Package incentives for marketing the plant.

5. Identify potential users of the plant.
6. Conduct marketing efforts with the current plant owner, if appropriate.
7. Sell community groups on marketing incentives, such as tax abatement.
8. Initiate and maintain contacts with state officials.
9. Coordinate activities among local education agencies to provide worker retraining and counseling.

**RECOMMENDATION 9: Identify Employers Which Have Laid Off Employees in the Past or Might in the Future**

Consulting with these firms will help community leaders determine some of the factors that result in lay offs. Knowing this, community leaders can better anticipate lay offs and develop contingency plans to lessen the effects.

**RECOMMENDATION 10: Organize a Regional/Cooperative Attraction Strategy**

Marketing strategies can be conducted on a regional basis including several counties. New business marketing strategies could include: (1) targeted business and industry contacts, (2) executive tours, (3) county appreciation days, (4) potential international trade missions, (5) revolving loan funds, (6) and direct mailings.

Image promotion is an important, long-term goal which can involve a number of counties in a region. Quality-of-life literature can be developed on each county to enhance its local, regional, and international image.

**RECOMMENDATION 11: Sponsor Feasibility Studies**

The first step is to determine the exact nature of the inputs needed. Next, a list of all the local firms which produce these products should also be developed and publicized locally to encourage local sales. The nature of these inputs as well as quantities needed, should be identified in a brochure.

This information can then: (1) be distributed to existing firms which might be able to produce the inputs and thereby meet the local demand, (2) used to attract new businesses which produce products existing firms are unable to produce.

**RECOMMENDATION 12: Repeat BR&E Program with New Firms/Sectors**

The BR&E survey process can be continued on two levels. Firms already surveyed can be contacted again on an annual basis. In addition, it is recommended that an abbreviated survey form be developed and used as a means of re-contact with the firms over the next two or three years. A full survey, similar to the one just conducted, should be repeated every four or five years.

Similar visitation programs focusing on other sectors could be conducted. For example, this survey could concentrate on service and manufacturing firms that complement each other.



A program to assist wholesale/retail trade can be accomplished by:

- a) surveying the wholesale/retail trade businesses in the county to identify their concerns and problems;
- b) developing educational programs about these concerns, such as marketing.

**RECOMMENDATION 13: Targeting Program to Promote Economic Diversity**

Information provided in the BR&E Final Report regarding firm size and employment concentrations should be reviewed. If large numbers of employees are employed by a very small number of firms, actions should be taken to lessen these concentrations or to prepare contingency plans in the event of contractions or closures.

In addition, if most employees work for the same kinds of firms, such as automobile producing or related industries, similar actions should be taken to lessen the community's vulnerability to down turns in those particular industries.

**RECOMMENDATION 14: Establish a County-Wide Retail Business Development Committee**

It is recommended that a county-wide retail business development committee be formed to investigate the possibility of coordinating retail-based business surveys, small business seminars, or other programs that can help make area retail businesses more competitive.

**RECOMMENDATION 15: Establish a Permanent Committee to be Responsible for Overseeing Implementation of Programs/Strategies Recommended in the BR&E Final Report**

Those on the committee will follow-up on the BR&E report to make sure recommendation are implemented. If additional committee members are needed, the chamber of commerce is to appoint members.

**RECOMMENDATION 16: Continue the BR&E Program on a Regional Basis**

The results of the BR&E survey would be much more complete if one survey format were used in both counties. The blending of resources would also strengthen both programs.

**RECOMMENDATION 17: Initiate a Target Marketing Effort**

In targeting firms for attraction which will complement existing firms, the first step is to determine the exact nature of the inputs needed. Next, a list of all the local firms which produce these products should also be developed and publicized locally to encourage local sales. The nature of these inputs, as well as quantities needed, should be identified in a brochure.



This information can then: (1) be distributed to existing firms which might be able to produce the inputs and thereby meet the local demand, (2) be used to attract new businesses which produce products which existing firms are unable to produce.

Image promotion is an important, long-term goal which can involve a number of counties in a region. Quality-of-life literature can be developed on each county to enhance its local, regional, and international image.

Task Force Recommendation selections should be based on the following three criteria:

1. Availability of federal, state, and local financial and leadership resources;
2. Quality of each BR&E program;
3. Time required for implementation.



# Notes

## **IX. MARKETING RESEARCH INFORMATION/SURVEY DATA CODING AND TABULATION**

This chapter describes the various data sources used by the Business Retention and Expansion Program and procedures for coding and tabulating data.

### **A. Marketing Research Information**

Composite Community Profiles are compiled to provide information, i.e., employment trends and concentrations of businesses in the communities. The primary data sources used to compile the Community Profiles are: the U.S. Industrial Outlook, County Business Patterns, State Unemployment Compensation Agency data, and Pull Factor Analysis data. Information concerning the shopping habits of consumers can be obtained by using the available consumer, customer and visitor surveys.

#### **THE U.S. INDUSTRIAL OUTLOOK**

The U.S. Industrial Outlook is a useful reference for economic development professionals. The economic forecasts for more than 350 manufacturing and service industries are discussed in addition to the macroeconomic forces affecting the world's economy. The Outlook is produced by the U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration.

The U.S. Industrial Outlook is used extensively in the BR&E program for several reasons. First, the information makes the volunteer visitors feel more comfortable during their interviews. Secondly, the visitor's familiarity with the firm may impress the firm representative being interviewed which improves the program's credibility and may encourage the representative to share more information. Thirdly, the information can be the basis for an early-warning system of plant relocations, closings, or contractions.

#### **COUNTY BUSINESS PATTERNS**

The County Business Patterns is an annual report produced by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. The report provides data on state- and county-level employment, first quarter and annual payrolls, total number of establishments, and the number of establishments by employment size class. Information in the report covers most of the economic sectors found in the U.S. economy and is classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes.

The BR&E Program uses County Business Patterns to provide information regarding a particular county's economic base. The information found in the County Business Patterns is used to develop the Employment Profile for the participating counties. Information from the County Business Patterns is also used to identify various business sizes (size is based on total employment) of a county. Classification of businesses based on size reveals the distribution of employment by economic sectors for participating counties.



## STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION AGENCY DATA

The Unemployment Compensation Agency provides data on employment and payroll by county and by month for major economic sectors. This data can be analyzed to identify important trends and patterns in employment. This information is used in the Employment Profile section of each community's Final Report. The Profile looks at employment over a designated ten-year period (e.g. 1981-1991). As the information is updated, the designated ten year period changes. The ten year analysis indicates the types and degree of change that occurred in various economic sectors.

### PULL FACTORS

The Pull Factor is the ratio used to estimate the proportion of local travel or retail expenditures that are captured by the community, in relation to expenditures captured by the state overall. A pull factor greater than one indicates that the local capture rate exceeds the state rate. A pull factor less than one indicates that a lower rate of dollars are captured locally than in the state on average.

$$\text{Pull Factor} = \frac{\frac{\text{Local Sales of Merchandise or Service}}{\text{Local Total Population}}}{\frac{\text{State Sales of Merchandise or Service}}{\text{State Total Population}}}$$

The Pull Factor Analysis can be prepared by using the data from Census of Retail 1982 and 1987, Bureau of the Census and Local Area Personal Income, 1982-1987, Bureau of Economic Analysis. Both publishing agencies are within the U.S. Department of Commerce.

### CONSUMER, CUSTOMER AND VISITOR SURVEYS

The importance of the consumer dictates the need for market research in order to formulate a strategic economic plan for retailers. Therefore, customer or consumer surveys are options in the retail program, and a visitor survey is an option in the tourism program. The consumer survey, conducted independently of the business visits, is a random mail or telephone survey of the residents of the marketing area. The customer survey, also conducted independently of the business visits, is a mail survey of customers or persons who shop at retail outlets in the county or community. The visitor survey is similar to the customer survey, but focusses on buying patterns of persons from outside the local area, i.e., on tourists or convention participants. The consumer surveys provide information about the buying patterns of county or community residents. The customer survey, on the other hand, provides information on the distribution of customers and their shopping patterns. Either survey or both surveys can be completed as part of the retail program. The visitor survey is available as an optional part of the tourism program.

It is suggested that if conducted, the customer survey be done at the same time as the business visitation program. Task Force representatives or volunteer visitors visit selected stores on a random basis and collect names and addresses of a designated number of customers. The customers are then mailed the questionnaires.

### **Outline of Procedure for Consumer Survey**

1. Coordinators and Task Force select random sample of households.  
  
The Coordinators need to decide on the sample size (500-600 residents is usually adequate for Ohio Programs).
  2. Specialize survey instrument to your local community. The BR&E staff produces the surveys.
  - 3a.\*
    - i. Mail questionnaires along with a cover letter to the randomly selected households.
    - ii. Mail postcards two weeks later reminding households about the questionnaires mailed two weeks earlier.
    - iii. Mail second questionnaire and a cover letter two weeks later to all households that have not returned their questionnaires.
  - 3b.\* Mail questionnaires along with a cover letter to the randomly selected households with a notification of a prize package to be awarded from a random drawing among those completing the questionnaire.
  - 3c.\* Telephone selected respondents and administer questionnaire.
  4. Coordinator makes copies of all the returned questionnaires and mails the copies to BR&E staff.  
  
The returned surveys are mailed to the BR&E staff in groups of 30-50 questionnaires. Grouping the surveys allows the BR&E staff to code the data in a timely manner, and provide interim reports to the coordinators throughout the survey period.
  5. The BR&E staff produced a report of the survey results.  
  
The survey report is provided to the coordinators to be distributed and used as information for marketing and strategy development. The results of the survey are also part of the final and executive summary reports of the BR&E program.
- \* Based on prior experience, mailing each respondent three requests and reminders or a single request with the promise of a random prize drawing are expected to result in similar rates. A third option, which is likely to be more expensive to administer, is the telephone survey. However, this option is expected to result in higher response rates.

## **Outline of Procedure for Customer and Visitor Surveys**

1. Coordinators and Task Force select businesses to be surveyed.

For visitor or customer surveys, the period over which survey is to be conducted, which depends on community's recreation season, must be determined. The coordinators also need to specify list of firms which will be visited to obtain list of customers names and addresses.

2. Send representative(s) from the local BR&E program to the selected businesses to collect a predetermined number of names and addresses (or telephone numbers) of customers that agree to participate in the survey.
3. Follow procedure 2, 3a, 3b, or 3c, 4, and 5 above for the consumer survey.

For the consumer, customer, and visitor surveys there is a charge based on the targeted sample size (Check with BR&E staff members for details). The BR&E staff provides the designated number of questionnaires, tabulates the results, and includes the results in the BR&E reports (or provides a brief report of results if they are not part of a regular BR&E program). The county or community bears the costs of obtaining the sample, distributing the questionnaires (or telephone costs), receiving questionnaires, and copying questionnaires for BR&E staff. The consumer, customer, and visitor surveys are included in the Appendix.

## **ADDITIONAL DATA SOURCES**

**Construction** Residential Units; Value of Residential Units; Single Family Units; Value of Single Family Units; Industrial Buildings; Value of Industrial Buildings; Commercial Buildings; Value of Commercial Buildings.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Commerce, " State/County Permit Authorized Construction in Permit Issuing Places," Annual Reports, (unpublished data).

**Federal Procurement** U.S. Department of Defense Contracts; Other Contracts; Total Contracts

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

**Income** Per Capita Income

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

**Population** Population Projections

Population of County and Largest Places

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census,  
Resident Births, Resident Deaths



**Harris Selectory - the Manufacturers Directory on Disc**, Published by Harrison Publishing Company, 2057 Aurora Road, Twinsburg, Ohio 44087-1999; Telephone; 1-800-888-5900

Statistical Information-A county-to-county analysis of employment as well as a classification of companies by S.I.C.

Geographic Section-Lists cities in alphabetical sequence with corporate data-in-depth on manufacturing companies

Standard Industrial Classifications-600 product groupings showing all manufacturers in the state

Alphabetic Section-List Manufacturers who constitute or serve industry

Industrial Product Section-Provides 4,000 separate product and sub-product classifications

## **B. Survey Data Coding and Tabulation**

When the firm visits start, the Coordinator should collect the completed visitation survey forms and send them to the BR&E staff for tabulating the survey data. The BR&E staff then can prepare a draft report of the findings of the survey and suggested strategies for the strategic plan to improve the competitiveness of local firms. The task of data entry and data tabulation can be done in many ways. For example, some people prefer to code and analyze the survey data in a spreadsheet package, like Quattro Pro, Lotus 123, or Excel. The advantage of using a spreadsheet package is that it is very easy and popular. However, the coding and tabulating procedures will be limited by a spreadsheet's capability, especially for tabulating the data. It requires much programming and steps to do a cross-tabulating procedure on a spreadsheet package.

On the other hand, the survey data can be coded by using a data base management package, such as dBASE IV, Paradox, or Fox. The advantage of using a data base management package to code the survey data, especially a long survey like BR&E visitation survey, is that it can apply a screen template to enter and edit data which is easier and more accurate. Features of a screen template include displaying the same format as the survey on the screen for the data processors to make their tasks easier and more accurate.

Also, the data can be tabulated by using a statistical package, such as SAS PC, or SPSS PC. Most statistical packages provide features of cross-tabulation and table formatting that are much easier to use than spreadsheet packages.

This section describes the procedures to code and tabulate survey data using the pre-specified files of the attached computer floppy disk in the DOS environment for the questionnaires in Section V of the handbook. The procedures presented below use dBASE IV for DOS to code the survey data, DBMS/COPY Plus for DOS to transfer the file structure, and SAS PC for DOS to tabulate the survey data. To use the files provided on the floppy disk, these software package must be on your computer. Any changes you make in the questionnaire require that the pre-specified files be modified to incorporate these changes. Similar procedures can be specified for alternative combinations of software packages.



### Data-entry on dBASE IV:

#### (1) Starting dBASE IV

1. Type **CD DBASE** to change to the dBASE directory.
2. Type **DBASE** to start the program.

#### (2) Loading the database template to the Data panel

1. After you load the dBASE IV, you see the control center. Use the up and down arrows to move the cursor to the Data panel.
2. Press F10 key to move the cursor from the Data panel to the top menu bar.
3. Use the up and down arrows to move the selector to the item **Add file to catalog** from Catalog Menu and press ENTER.
4. Move the cursor to the source drive (i.e., A or B) and press ENTER.
5. Move the cursor to the source file (i.e., RETAIL.DBF that is for retail and tourism program or MANUF.DBF that is for industrial program) and press ENTER.

#### (3) Loading the screen template to the Form panel

1. Use the up and down arrows to move the cursor to the Form panel.
2. Press F10 key to move the cursor from the Form panel to the top menu bar.
3. Move the selector to the item **Add file to catalog** from Catalog Menu and press ENTER.
4. Move the cursor to the source drive (i.e., A or B) and press ENTER.
5. Move the cursor to the source file (i.e., RETAIL.SCR that is for retail and tourism program or MANUF.SCR that is for industrial program) and press ENTER.

#### (4) Entering the data

1. In the Control Center, highlight the database name (i.e., RETAIL that is for retail and tourism program or MANUF that is for industrial program) in the Data panel and press ENTER. The prompt box appears.
2. Press D to select the **Display data** command.
3. Start to enter the survey data from here.
4. After the data entry is completed, press F10 key to move the cursor to the top menu bar.
5. Move the selector to the **Exit** from Exit Menu and press ENTER. This will bring you back to the Control Center.

#### (5) Exiting the dBASE IV

1. In the Control Center, press F10 key to move the cursor to the top menu bar.
2. Move the selector to the item **Quit to Dos** from Exit Menu and press ENTER to exit dBASE IV

## Data-transferring on DBMS/COPY Plus

### (1) Starting DBMS/COPY Plus

1. Type **CD DBMSCOPY** to change to the DBMS/COPY directory.
2. Type **DBMSCOPY** to start the program.

### (2) Choosing the input or source file

1. After you load the program, the first input selection menu lists ten groups of software systems. Use the up and down arrows to highlight the **Databases** and press ENTER.
2. The DBMS/COPY will now list the packages in the databases you have chosen. Use the up and down arrows to highlight the **dBASE IV** and press ENTER.
3. After the package is selected, DBMS/COPY will list all the files in the current directory with the appropriate file extension. For example, dBASE IV files end with **.dbf**. Press F9 key to change directory or drive to where you store your RETAIL.DBF or MANUF.DBF.

### (3) Choosing the output or destination file

1. To choose the destination or output file, just repeat the entire process in (2). Choose the **Statistics** group, the **SAS/PC** software package.
2. After the package is selected, you can press F2 key to create a new file. You do not need to type any file extension. DBMS/COPY will supply the extension with **.ssd** automatically.

### (4) Completing the data transfer

Once the input and output files are selected DBMS/COPY will present the Selection Verification Screen for confirmation. Check this screen to verify the software packages and the files. If there are errors, use the Esc key to back step through the menus to make any necessary corrections.

If the input and output specifications are correct press ENTER to begin the data translation.

After DBMS/COPY is finished, it will ask if you want to transfer another file or exit DBMS/COPY.

### Data-tabulation on SAS PC

- (1) Type *CD SAS* to change to the SAS directory.
- (2) The SAS program file is in RETAIL.SAS that is for retail and tourism program or MANUF.SAS that is for industrial program. Before you run these SAS program files, you need to make some changes first.
  1. Go to any text editor package, i.e. Wordperfect or DOS text editor, and open RETAIL93.SAS or MANUF93.SAS file that is included in BR&E diskette.
  2. After you open the file, you need to change two things:
    - a. Change **LIBNAME SSD 'C:\DIRECTORY'** which is in the beginning of the file to the directory that you store your SAS data set, for example:  
**LIBNAME SSD 'A:\'**, or **LIBNAME SSD 'C:\MYDATA'**.
    - b. Change **DATA BUSI; SET SSD.DATA;** which is in page 5 to the file name of your SAS data set, for example:  
**DATA BUSI; SET SSD.RETAIL;** or **DATA BUSI; SET SSD.MANUF;**
- (3) Type *SAS drive:sourcefile drive:outputfile* to start the program  
  
(i.e., SAS A:\RETAIL.SAS A:\RETAIL.LST or  
SAS A:\MANUF.SAS A:\MANUF.LST)
- (4) When the program is done, it will be back to DOS prompt. The output is located in *drive:outputfile* (i.e., A:\RETAIL.LST or A:\MANUF.LST).

## RETAIL BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM

### COMMUNITY CONSUMER SURVEY

1. For each item and service indicated below, please check the business district where you generally purchase the item or service. Choose only one business district. Also indicate the most important reason you generally purchase there. Check only one reason.

<u>Business District</u>			<u>Reason</u>		
a. District 1	d. District 4	g. Other (Specify)	1. Selection	4. Quality	7. Quick service
b. District 2	e. District 5	_____	2. Parking	5. Store Hours	8. Location
c. District 3	f. District 6		3. Price	6. Atmosphere	
1. Most of my purchases:	District _____		Reason _____		
2. Groceries:	District _____		Reason _____		
3. Drugs and toiletries:	District _____		Reason _____		
4. Clothing:	District _____		Reason _____		
5. Hardware items:	District _____		Reason _____		
6. Appliances:	District _____		Reason _____		
7. Furniture:	District _____		Reason _____		
8. Automobiles:	District _____		Reason _____		
9. Most services:	District _____		Reason _____		
10. Meals away from home:	District _____		Reason _____		
11. Entertainment:	District _____		Reason _____		
12. Automobile repair:	District _____		Reason _____		
13. Banking:	District _____		Reason _____		
14. Dry cleaning:	District _____		Reason _____		
15. Insurance:	District _____		Reason _____		
16. Medical services:	District _____		Reason _____		
17. Dental services:	District _____		Reason _____		



2. Disregarding where you shop most often, compare the following downtown business districts by circling the district which is the best in each category.

a. District 1 Downtown    b. District 2 Downtown    c. District 3 Downtown

1.	Parking	a	b	c
2.	Variety of stores	a	b	c
3.	Merchandise selection	a	b	c
4.	Merchandise quality	a	b	c
5.	Shopping atmosphere	a	b	c
6.	Price	a	b	c
7.	Helpful, knowledgeable, and friendly personnel	a	b	c
8.	Store hours	a	b	c
9.	Convenience	a	b	c
10.	Little traffic congestion	a	b	c
11.	Safely	a	b	c
12.	Advertising	a	b	c
13.	Best overall	a	b	c

3. Pick the best mall and shopping center in each category. Circle one mall and one shopping center in each category:

Malls

Shopping Centers

a. Mall 1

b. Mall 2

a. Center 1

b. Center 2

1.	Parking	a	b	a	b
2.	Variety of stores	a	b	a	b
3.	Merchandise selection	a	b	a	b
4.	Merchandise quality	a	b	a	b
5.	Shopping atmosphere	a	b	a	b
6.	Price	a	b	a	b
7.	Helpful, knowledgeable, and friendly personnel	a	b	a	b
8.	Store hours	a	b	a	b
9.	Convenience	a	b	a	b
10.	Little traffic congestion	a	b	a	b
11.	Safely	a	b	a	b
12.	Advertising	a	b	a	b
13.	Best overall	a	b	a	b

4. Indicate after each business district what, if anything, retailers can do to get you to shop there more often:

1. District 1 (downtown) \_\_\_\_\_
2. District 2 shopping center \_\_\_\_\_
3. District 3 mall \_\_\_\_\_
4. Small town(s) in County \_\_\_\_\_

5. Circle the time and duration of your most typical shopping trip:

1. Day of the week:      Monday   Tuesday   Wednesday   Thursday   Friday   Saturday   Sunday
2. Time of the day:      A.M.:                      6   7   8   9   10   11   noon
- P.M.:                      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   midnight
3. Duration of trip: 1 hour   2 hours   3 hours   4 hours   5 hours   6 hours   7 hours

6. Which of the following best describes where you shop most often:

- a. Downtown District 1
- b. District 2 shopping center
- c. District 1 Mall
- d. A single store not located with other stores
- e. Other(s) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Considering only the business district indicated above where you shop the most often, what changes are necessary for merchants to get even more of your business? Choose only five (5) and rate them according to your priorities, using "1" to indicate top priority, "2" indicating second priority, etc.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Improved parking
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ More variety of stores
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ Better quality of merchandise
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ Better atmosphere
- e. \_\_\_\_\_ A greater feeling of safety
- f. \_\_\_\_\_ More places to eat
- g. \_\_\_\_\_ More special events
- h. \_\_\_\_\_ More competitive pricing
- i. \_\_\_\_\_ Better selection of merchandise
- j. \_\_\_\_\_ Better customer service
- k. \_\_\_\_\_ Evening store hours
- l. \_\_\_\_\_ Less traffic congestion
- m. \_\_\_\_\_ More advertising
- n. \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. Please indicate if the following statement is true:

Even if all of the changes I indicated in the above question were made,  
I probably wouldn't shop more in the community.

- a. True
- b. False

9. Please look at the choices below: What potential new businesses would you most likely use if they were to open ne your home? Choose only five (5) and rate them according to your priorities, using "1" to indicate top priority, "2" indicating second priority, etc.

- |                        |                             |                                 |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 01 _____ Antiques      | 13 _____ Drugs              | 25 _____ Hobby shop             |
| 02 _____ Appliances    | 14 _____ Electronics        | 26 _____ Live theater           |
| 03 _____ Art Galleries | 15 _____ Entertainment      | 27 _____ Movie theater          |
| 04 _____ Arts/Crafts   | 16 _____ Fast Food          | 28 _____ Music store            |
| 05 _____ Bakery        | 17 _____ Financial services | 29 _____ Professional services  |
| 06 _____ Bookstore     | 18 _____ Fish market        | 30 _____ Records                |
| 07 _____ Butcher       | 19 _____ Furniture          | 31 _____ Restaurants            |
| 08 _____ Cameras       | 20 _____ Garden Center      | 32 _____ Shoes                  |
| 09 _____ Clothing      | 21 _____ Gifts/knickknacks  | 33 _____ Sports equipment       |
| 10 _____ Delicatessen  | 22 _____ Grocery            | 34 _____ Other (Please specify) |
| 11 _____ Department    | 23 _____ Hardware           | _____                           |
| 12 _____ Discount      | 24 _____ Health club        | _____                           |

10. In which of the following business districts would you most likely patronize the new businesses indicated in the previous question.

- District 1 (downtown)
- District 2 shopping center
- District 1 mall
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

11. What advertising do you notice from local merchants? Circle only the three advertising which you notice the most.

- Newspaper(s)
- "Open Market" tabloid
- Radio
- Flyers
- TV
- Window displays
- Billboards
- Yellow pages
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

12. To what extent do the following advertising media influence your shopping decisions?

- |                            | a. A lot | b. Some | c. Little or none |
|----------------------------|----------|---------|-------------------|
| 1. "Open Market" tabloid   | a        | b       | c                 |
| 2. Local weekly "shoppers" | a        | b       | c                 |
| 3. Local newspapers        | a        | b       | c                 |
| 4. Large city newspapers   | a        | b       | c                 |
| 5. Circulares or flyers    | a        | b       | c                 |
| 6. Local radio             | a        | b       | c                 |
| 7. Large city radio        | a        | b       | c                 |
| 8. TV                      | a        | b       | c                 |
| 9. Billboards              | a        | b       | c                 |
| 10. Yellow pages           | a        | b       | c                 |
| 11. Other _____            | a        | b       | c                 |

13. What do you like best about County's stores and/or private services?

---

---

14. What changes need to be made by County's stores and/or private services?

---

---

*Please indicate the following about yourself:*

15. What is your sex?

- a. Male                      b. Female

16. What is your marital status?

- a. Single                      b. Married

17. What is your age bracket?

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| a. 17 and Under | e. 46 to 54    |
| b. 18 to 25     | f. 55 to 64    |
| c. 26 to 35     | g. 65 and Over |
| d. 36 to 45     |                |

18. What is your highest degree obtained?

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Less than high school | d. Bachelor's degree         |
| b. High school diploma   | e. Master's degree or beyond |
| c. Associate degree      |                              |

19. What is your occupation? Please check all that apply.

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| a. Public Administration                    | h. Military             |
| b. Executive, Managerial, or Administrative | i. Homemaker            |
| c. Professional                             | j. Student              |
| d. Technical                                | k. Retired              |
| e. Sales                                    | l. Currently unemployed |
| f. Laborer                                  | m. Other                |
| g. Clerical                                 |                         |



20. Including you, how many people live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_

21. Please check the yearly income range of your household.

- |    |                      |    |                      |    |                       |
|----|----------------------|----|----------------------|----|-----------------------|
| a. | Less than \$10,000   | d. | \$30,001 to \$40,000 | g. | \$60,001 to \$ 80,000 |
| b. | \$10,001 to \$20,000 | e. | \$40,001 to \$50,000 | h. | \$80,001 to \$100,000 |
| c. | \$20,001 to \$30,000 | f. | \$50,001 to \$60,000 | i. | \$100,001 and Over    |

22. Where do you live? (business district refers to district indicated at top of page 1)

- a. In or near this business district
- b. In this urban area but outside this business district
- c. Elsewhere in the following urban area in the county \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Elsewhere in the county \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Outside the county but in the State, indicate zip code \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Outside the State, indicate zip code \_\_\_\_\_

23. How long have you lived at your present address?

- a. Under 5 years
- b. 5 to 15 years
- c. 16 to 25 years
- d. Over 25 years

24. Where do you work?

- a. In or near this business district
- b. In this urban area but outside this business district
- c. Elsewhere in the following urban area in the county \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Elsewhere in the county \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Outside the county but in the State, indicate zip code \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Outside the State, indicate zip code \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for completing and returning this survey.*

# RETAIL BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM

## COMMUNITY CUSTOMER SURVEY

Business District \_\_\_\_\_

Business conducting survey \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Administered by \_\_\_\_\_

*Please answer all questions completely. The business or business district refers to those listed above.  
All responses will remain completely confidential and will be reported as a group.*

1. Where do you most often purchase the following items? Place any letter on the right in the blanks on the left.

- |           |                    |    |             |
|-----------|--------------------|----|-------------|
| 1. _____  | Clothing           | a. | District 1  |
| 2. _____  | Automobiles        | b. | District 2  |
| 3. _____  | Furniture          | c. | District 3  |
| 4. _____  | Medical Services   | d. | District 4  |
| 5. _____  | Drugs & toiletries | e. | District 5  |
| 6. _____  | Entertainment      | f. | District 6  |
| 7. _____  | Groceries          | g. | District 7  |
| 8. _____  | Restaurant meals   | h. | District 8  |
| 9. _____  | Auto repair        | i. | District 9  |
| 10. _____ | Hardware items     | j. | Other _____ |
| 11. _____ | Appliances         |    |             |
| 12. _____ | Banking Services   |    |             |
| 13. _____ | Insurance          |    |             |

2. In which of the above business districts do you make most of your purchases? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Place one or more than one letter of those business districts above in the blank)

3. For the business and business district indicated above, circle the letters which best indicate prices and quality of goods:

### Prices of Goods and Services

### Quality of Goods and Services

		very competitive	competitive	very expensive	expensive	excellent	above average	average	poor
1.	This store (if you are now in a store)	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d
2.	This business district	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d
3.	The business district indicated in question 2, where you purchase the most (answer only if different than "this business district")	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d

4. Circle the time and duration of your most typical shopping trip:

1. Day of the week: Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday
2. Time of the day: A.M.: 6 7 8 9 10 11 noon  
P.M.: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 midnight
3. Duration of trip: 1 hour 2 hours 3 hours 4 hours 5 hours 6 hours 7 hours

5. For the business and business district indicated above, circle the type of advertising that you notice the most:

- |   | Newspaper | "Open Market" | Radio | TV | Store windows | Billboards | Yellow pages | Other _____ |
|---|-----------|---------------|-------|----|---------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1. This store<br>(if you are now in a store)  | a         | b             | c     | d  | e             | f          | g            | h           |
| 2. This business district   | a         | b             | c     | d  | e             | f          | g            | h           |
| 3. The business district<br>indicated in question 2<br>where you purchase the most<br>(if different than this district) | a         | b             | c     | d  | e             | f          | g            | h           |

6. To what extent do the following advertising media influence your shopping decisions?

- |                            | a. A lot | b. Some | c. Little or none |
|----------------------------|----------|---------|-------------------|
| 1. "Open Market" tabloid   | a        | b       | c                 |
| 2. Local weekly "shoppers" | a        | b       | c                 |
| 3. Local newspapers        | a        | b       | c                 |
| 4. Large city newspapers   | a        | b       | c                 |
| 5. Circulares or flyers    | a        | b       | c                 |
| 6. Local radio             | a        | b       | c                 |
| 7. Large city radio        | a        | b       | c                 |
| 8. TV                      | a        | b       | c                 |
| 9. Billboards              | a        | b       | c                 |
| 10. Yellow pages           | a        | b       | c                 |
| 11. Other _____            | a        | b       | c                 |

For question 7 to 11, "this business district" refers to the district in which you received the questionnaire, which is indicated on the first line of the first page.

7. Please look at the choices below: What changes can be made by merchants in this business district in order for them to get more of your business? Choose only five (5) and rate them according to your priorities, using "1" to indicate top priority, "2" indicating second priority, etc.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. _____ Improved parking              | h. _____ More competitive pricing        |
| b. _____ More variety of stores        | i. _____ Better selection of merchandise |
| c. _____ Better quality of merchandise | j. _____ Better customer service         |
| d. _____ Better atmosphere             | k. _____ Evening store hours             |
| e. _____ A greater feeling of safety   | l. _____ Less traffic congestion         |
| f. _____ More places to eat            | m. _____ More advertising                |
| g. _____ More special events           | n. _____ Other                           |

8. Please indicate by circling "True" or "False", if the following statement is true:

Even if all of the changes I indicated in the above question were made  
I probably wouldn't shop more in this business district.

- a. True
- b. False

9. Look at the choices below: What potential new stores would you most likely use if they were to open in this business district? Choose only five (5) and rate them according to your priorities, using "1" to indicate top priority, "2" indicating second priority, etc.

- |          |               |          |                    |          |                        |
|----------|---------------|----------|--------------------|----------|------------------------|
| 01 _____ | Antiques      | 13 _____ | Drugs              | 25 _____ | Hobby shop             |
| 02 _____ | Appliances    | 14 _____ | Electronics        | 26 _____ | Live theater           |
| 03 _____ | Art Galleries | 15 _____ | Entertainment      | 27 _____ | Movie theater          |
| 04 _____ | Arts/Crafts   | 16 _____ | Fast Food          | 28 _____ | Music store            |
| 05 _____ | Bakery        | 17 _____ | Financial services | 29 _____ | Professional services  |
| 06 _____ | Bookstore     | 18 _____ | Fish market        | 30 _____ | Records                |
| 07 _____ | Butcher       | 19 _____ | Furniture          | 31 _____ | Restaurants            |
| 08 _____ | Cameras       | 20 _____ | Garden Center      | 32 _____ | Shoes                  |
| 09 _____ | Clothing      | 21 _____ | Gifts/knickknacks  | 33 _____ | Sports equipment       |
| 10 _____ | Delicatessen  | 22 _____ | Grocery            | 34 _____ | Other (Please specify) |
| 11 _____ | Department    | 23 _____ | Hardware           |          | _____                  |
| 12 _____ | Discount      | 24 _____ | Health club        |          | _____                  |

10. What, if anything, do you like best about shopping in this business district?

---

---

11. What changes, if any, need to be made by merchants in this business district?

---

---

*Please indicate the following about yourself.*

12. What is your sex?

- a. Male
- b. Female

13. What is your marital status?

- a. Single
- b. Married

14. What is your age according to the following age ranges?

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| a. 17 and Under | e. 46 to 54    |
| b. 18 to 25     | f. 55 to 64    |
| c. 26 to 35     | g. 65 and Over |
| d. 36 to 45     |                |



15. What is your highest degree obtained?

- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. Less than high school | d. Bachelor's degree         |
| b. High school diploma   | e. Master's degree or beyond |
| c. Associate degree      |                              |

16. What is your occupation? Please check all that apply.

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| a. Public Administration                    | h. Military             |
| b. Executive, Managerial, or Administrative | i. Homemaker            |
| c. Professional                             | j. Student              |
| d. Technical                                | k. Retired              |
| e. Sales                                    | l. Currently unemployed |
| f. Laborer                                  | m. Other                |
| g. Clerical                                 |                         |

17. Including you, how many people live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_

18. Where do you live? (business district refers to district indicated at top of page)

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. In or near this business district                      |       |
| b. In this urban area but outside this business district  |       |
| c. Elsewhere in the following urban area in the county    | _____ |
| d. Elsewhere in the county                                |       |
| e. Outside the county but in the State, indicate zip code | _____ |
| f. Outside the State, indicate zip code                   | _____ |

19. How long have you lived at your present address?

- |                  |                  |                   |                  |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| a. Under 5 years | b. 5 to 15 years | c. 16 to 25 years | d. over 25 years |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|

20. Where do you work?

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. In or near this business district                      |       |
| b. In this urban area but outside this business district  |       |
| c. Elsewhere in the following urban area in the county    | _____ |
| d. Elsewhere in the county                                |       |
| e. Outside the county but in the State, indicate zip code | _____ |
| f. Outside the State, indicate zip code                   | _____ |

Comments:

---

---

Thank you very much. Your responses are confidential and will allow businesses to better respond to your needs.

Feel free to discuss the questionnaire with the merchant or surveyor, but first fill out the entire questionnaire and give it to the merchant. Discuss a blank questionnaire with the merchant so that you do not change any answers as a result of your discussion.

# 1994 COMMUNITY TOURISM CUSTOMER SURVEY

Location \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Please answer all questions completely. All responses will remain completely confidential and will be reported as a group.*

1. Who is on this trip with you?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I am alone      b. \_\_\_\_\_ With my spouse      c. \_\_\_\_\_ With my family of \_\_\_\_\_ persons  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ With a group of \_\_\_\_\_ persons      e. \_\_\_\_\_ With a tour group

2. How long ago did you plan this trip to XX COMMUNITY ?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Less than one week      b. \_\_\_\_\_ One week to one month      c. \_\_\_\_\_ One to two months  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ Three months      e. \_\_\_\_\_ Three to six months      f. \_\_\_\_\_ Six months to one year  
g. \_\_\_\_\_ More than one year

3. The primary purpose of this trip is: (Please check only one)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Visiting parks      b. \_\_\_\_\_ Fishing      c. \_\_\_\_\_ Charter fishing  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ Visiting a museum/historical site      e. \_\_\_\_\_ Medical/Educational      f. \_\_\_\_\_ Shopping for antiques, crafts  
g. \_\_\_\_\_ Shopping malls      h. \_\_\_\_\_ Boating/Sailing/Swimming      i. \_\_\_\_\_ Visiting family & friends  
j. \_\_\_\_\_ Visiting wineries      k. \_\_\_\_\_ Festivals      l. \_\_\_\_\_ Golfing  
m. \_\_\_\_\_ Package weekend getaway      n. \_\_\_\_\_ I am a resident      o. \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Is this your first visit to XX COMMUNITY ?      a. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes      b. \_\_\_\_\_ No

If you checked Yes, please go to question 6.

If you checked No, in what year did you first visit XX COMMUNITY ?      19\_\_\_\_\_

And, how often do you visit XX COMMUNITY ?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Every year      b. \_\_\_\_\_ Three of four years      c. \_\_\_\_\_ Every other year      d. \_\_\_\_\_ Occasionally

5. How many days did you visit **XX COMMUNITY** in 1993? \_\_\_\_\_ Days

And, please check if you visited the following places.

- |                  |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| a. _____ area 1  | b. _____ area 2  | c. _____ area 3  |
| d. _____ area 4  | e. _____ area 5  | f. _____ area 6  |
| g. _____ area 7  | h. _____ area 8  | i. _____ area 9  |
| j. _____ area 10 | k. _____ area 11 | l. _____ area 12 |

6. How many days do you plan to visit **XX COMMUNITY** in 1994? \_\_\_\_\_ Days

And, please check if you **plan** to visit the following places.

- |                  |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| a. _____ area 1  | b. _____ area 2  | c. _____ area 3  |
| d. _____ area 4  | e. _____ area 5  | f. _____ area 6  |
| g. _____ area 7  | h. _____ area 8  | i. _____ area 9  |
| j. _____ area 10 | k. _____ area 11 | l. _____ area 12 |

7. When you stay overnight, what type of lodging do you use? Check all that apply.

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| a. _____ Do not stay overnight, then please go to question 8. |                                       |
| b. _____ Hotel/motel  | c. _____ Own cottage/home             |
| d. _____ Bed & Breakfast                                      | e. _____ Condominiums                 |
| f. _____ Rental cottage/home                                  | g. _____ Boat                         |
| h. _____ Friend/relative's home                               | j. _____ Other (Please specify) _____ |

And, in or near what community do you stay? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Did you visit **XX COMMUNITY** in 1993? a. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes b. \_\_\_\_\_ No

If you checked No, please go to question 9.

If you check Yes, how much in total did you spend?

(I am reporting for: a. \_\_\_\_\_ Myself b. \_\_\_\_\_ My family c. \_\_\_\_\_ My group)

- |  |                             |                          |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. _____ Under \$100   | b. _____ \$100 to \$299     | c. _____ \$300 to \$499  |
| d. _____ \$500 to \$999  | e. _____ \$1,000 to \$2,999 |                          |
| f. _____ \$3,000 or more. If you checked here, did you purchase large items (such as boats)? |                             |                          |
|  |                             | a. _____ Yes b. _____ No |
| g. _____ As a resident, I spent about _____ % of my income in _____.                         |                             |                          |

9. During your visits to **XX COMMUNITY** in 1994, how much in total do you plan to spend?

(I am reporting for: a. \_\_\_\_\_ Myself b. \_\_\_\_\_ My family c. \_\_\_\_\_ My group)

- |  |                             |                          |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. _____ Under \$100   | b. _____ \$100 to \$299     | c. _____ \$300 to \$499  |
| d. _____ \$500 to \$999  | e. _____ \$1,000 to \$2,999 |                          |
| f. _____ \$3,000 or more. If you checked here, did you purchase large items (such as boats)? |                             |                          |
|  |                             | a. _____ Yes b. _____ No |
| g. _____ As a resident, I spent about _____ % of my income in <b>XX COMMUNITY</b> .          |                             |                          |

10. Please estimate the percentage of your total expenditure to each item listed below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ % Lodging
2. \_\_\_\_\_ % Restaurants
3. \_\_\_\_\_ % Transportation (including gas, renting car, etc)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ % Fees for attractions
5. \_\_\_\_\_ % Groceries
6. \_\_\_\_\_ % Sports equipment
7. \_\_\_\_\_ % Marinas/fishing
8. \_\_\_\_\_ % Crafts/arts/antiques
9. \_\_\_\_\_ % Drug stores/pharmacies
10. \_\_\_\_\_ % Clothing stores
11. \_\_\_\_\_ % Golf
12. \_\_\_\_\_ % Other

11. Are the prices of the goods and services you purchased in XX COMMUNITY:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Very competitive      b. \_\_\_\_\_ Competitive      c. \_\_\_\_\_ Slightly expensive      d. \_\_\_\_\_ Very expensive

12. How would you rank the quality of the goods and services you purchased in XX COMMUNITY:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Poor      b. \_\_\_\_\_ Average      c. \_\_\_\_\_ Above average      d. \_\_\_\_\_ Excellent

13. To what extent did the following advertising media attract you to XX COMMUNITY? Please choose the five most important ones. Use "1" to indicate the top ranked choice, then continuing through five to indicate the fifth ranked choice.

- |                                       |  |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| a. _____ Visitors guide               | b. _____ Tourist Information Centers     | c. _____ Newspaper                |
| d. _____ Radio                        | e. _____ TV                              | f. _____ Yellow pages             |
| g. _____ Billboards                   | h. _____ Outdoor displays                | i. _____ Window displays          |
| j. _____ Flyers                       | k. _____ Learning from friends/relatives | l. _____ Brochures                |
| m. _____ Magazines                    | n. _____ Visitors bureau                 | o. _____ Travel shows             |
| p. _____ Chamber of Commerce          | q. _____ Previous experience             | r. _____ Travel agents (i.e. AAA) |
| s. _____ Other (Please specify) _____ |  |                                   |

14. Which of the following best describes where you visit most often:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ XX COMMUNITY
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ Other areas of the State (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ Areas outside of the State (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

15. What do you think are the most important needs for improved tourism in XX COMMUNITY? Check the three most important. Use "1" to indicate top priority, "2" the second priority, etc.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| a. _____ Better public facilities              | b. _____ Better highway signs            |
| c. _____ Better weather information            | d. _____ Better customer service         |
| e. _____ Better and/or more boating services   | f. _____ More competitive pricing        |
| g. _____ Greater variety of lodging facilities | h. _____ More lodging facilities         |
| i. _____ More camping facilities               | j. _____ More public parks and beaches   |
| k. _____ More shoreline fishing access         | l. _____ Larger variety of stores        |
| m. _____ More places to eat                    | n. _____ Better selection of merchandise |
| o. _____ Better quality of merchandise         | p. _____ Evening store hours             |
| q. _____ Less traffic congestion               | r. _____ More advertising                |
| s. _____ Better visitors guide                 | t. _____ Other (Please specify) _____    |

16. What do you like best about visiting XX COMMUNITY?

---

---



17. What changes, if any, need to be made by tourism attractions/businesses in XX COMMUNITY?

---

---

*Please indicate the following about yourself:*

18. What is your sex?

a. \_\_\_\_\_ Male                      b. \_\_\_\_\_ Female

19. What is your marital status?

a. \_\_\_\_\_ Single                      b. \_\_\_\_\_ Married

20. What is your age?

a. \_\_\_\_\_ 18 to 25                      b. \_\_\_\_\_ 26 to 35                      c. \_\_\_\_\_ 36 to 45  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ 46 to 55                      e. \_\_\_\_\_ 56 to 64                      f. \_\_\_\_\_ 65 to 74                      g. \_\_\_\_\_ 75 and over

21. What is your highest degree obtained?

a. \_\_\_\_\_ Less than high school                      b. \_\_\_\_\_ High school diploma                      c. \_\_\_\_\_ Associate degree  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ Bachelor's degree                      e. \_\_\_\_\_ Master's degree or beyond

22. What is your occupation? Please check all that apply.

a. \_\_\_\_\_ Executive, managerial, or administrative                      b. \_\_\_\_\_ Public administration                      c. \_\_\_\_\_ Professional  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ Technical                      e. \_\_\_\_\_ Sales                      f. \_\_\_\_\_ Laborer                      g. \_\_\_\_\_ Clerical  
h. \_\_\_\_\_ Military                      i. \_\_\_\_\_ Homemaker                      j. \_\_\_\_\_ Student                      k. \_\_\_\_\_ Craftsman  
l. \_\_\_\_\_ Retired                      m. \_\_\_\_\_ Other

23. Including you, how many people live in your household? \_\_\_\_\_

24. Please check the yearly income range of your household:

a. \_\_\_\_\_ Less than \$10,000                      b. \_\_\_\_\_ \$10,001 to \$20,000                      c. \_\_\_\_\_ \$20,001 to \$30,000  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ \$30,001 to \$40,000                      e. \_\_\_\_\_ \$40,001 to \$50,000                      f. \_\_\_\_\_ \$50,001 to \$60,000  
g. \_\_\_\_\_ \$60,001 to \$80,000                      h. \_\_\_\_\_ \$80,001 to \$100,000                      i. \_\_\_\_\_ \$100,001 and over

25. Where do you live?

County \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip code \_\_\_\_\_ Country (if other than the U.S.) \_\_\_\_\_

26. Additional comments:

---

---

Thank you for completing and returning this survey to \_\_\_\_\_.





## **X. HOLDING THE COMMUNITY MEETING**

The community meeting, during which the survey findings and the strategic plan from the BR&E program are presented, provides the opportunity for the community to recognize the "end" of the BR&E visitation program and the "beginning" of new economic development initiatives. Even though the visitation stage of your BR&E program has concluded, you have just gathered a detailed data base about your firms and have just announced a strategy for economic development. The community meeting, therefore, should signify the start of local initiatives to improve your business climate, not the end of your economic development efforts.

### **Suggested Format for the Meeting**

From previous community meetings, we have concluded that the format described below seems very effective. It was developed after considerable trial and error and reflects the best elements of several BR&E programs.

Community meetings may be held as breakfast, luncheon or dinner meetings, or as a stand alone meeting. They may be specifically scheduled or part of another organization's function (Rotary, Kiwanis etc.).

A suggested agenda for community meeting (a typical agenda is 30-45 minutes in length):

1.     Introductions (Coordinator)
  - a.     organizations sponsoring the program (individually)
  - b.     organizations endorsing the program (individually)
  - c.     Assistant Coordinator
  - d.     BR&E Consultant (individually)
  - e.     BR&E staff (individually)
  - f.     Task Force members (individually)
  - g.     volunteers (collectively)
  - h.     firms (collectively)
2.     Review of the BR&E program's history and purpose (BR&E staff member)
3.     Testimonials (business representatives) and/or program accomplishments  
(Local elected officials such as county commissioners, mayors, bank presidents, etc.)
4.     Presentation of the results and the strategic plan  
(BR&E staff, Coordinators, Consultant, Task Force)
  - a.     survey findings (BR&E staff, Coordinators or Task Force)
  - b.     recommendations (Coordinators, Consultant or Task Force)



## **Introduction**

The BR&E Coordinator should introduce and recognize the key players in the program. These include the organizational sponsor, the endorsing organizations, Task Force members, volunteers, firms, the Assistant Coordinator, the BR&E Consultant, and the BR&E staff.

The sponsor of the program should be introduced by name and the organizations endorsing the program should be read. The Task Force, Consultant, and the BR&E staff members should be introduced individually and asked to stand. If you provide a packet of materials for each of the participants/guests (which we recommend), there should be a list of all the volunteer visitors, a list of all the firms that were visited, and a list of participants at this meeting (if at all possible). (The "packet of materials" is usually the executive summary report, agenda, and the lists mentioned above. It may also include pamphlets about local or state programs, such as labor training programs or financing programs, that would be of use to local businesses.) The Consultant should be introduced by name and asked to stand.

At one community meeting, dignitaries were introduced by name and included state representatives, senators, county commissioners, mayors, city councilmen, chamber of commerce executives, and CIC presidents. The list went on and on. While impressive, this format took too much time (25 minutes). Yet without the introductions, many people would not have realized the full nature of the group assembled. One method to not only save time but also demonstrate appreciation for each guest at the meeting is to print a list of those in attendance and enclose it in the packet of materials.

## **Review of BR&E Program's History and Purpose**

The BR&E staff member gives overview of BR&E program, summarizing activities throughout the state and follow-up services provided to the community.

## **Testimonials**

Testimonials to the BR&E program can be presented anywhere in the agenda. Testimonials are important because they illustrate the action-orientation of the program. During the visitation program, local leaders responded to establishments' complaints and concerns through some sort of follow-up work. In a few cases, significant assistance might be made and should be shared with the community. Some establishments are quite willing to share their experiences with the community while others are not. If possible, you should try to have testimonials that relate to the recommendations. Even if the firm's testimonial is only marginally related to a recommendation it might be worthwhile to have its representative give a one- or two-minute speech. It is more important that the representative give a testimonial than it is for the testimonial to reflect or support a recommendation completely.

## **Presentation of Results and Strategic Plan**

The presentation of results and the strategic plan should take no more than 20 to 30 minutes. It needs to have a varied format to maintain audience interest.



If the audience is large, it is impossible to generate discussion and reactions about the recommendations and still keep the presentation orderly and within the time limits. Realizing this, the Coordinator should offer to meet with individual organizations to discuss the recommendations in greater detail. This option allows the Coordinator (and Task Force) to better inform local leaders about their recommendations.

Each of the four strategies should be presented in two parts:

1. the results relating to the strategy are presented by the BR&E staff member, or Coordinator, or Task Force member
2. the recommendations are presented by the Coordinators and Task Force members

**Results** The survey results presented are only those related directly to each strategy. Sometimes only two or three of the most important results are presented. It is important to keep this aspect short and succinct. Graphics on overhead transparencies or slides are used to illustrate these results.

It is very important to present this factual data for each of the recommendations. First, it demonstrates that the recommendations are based on fact and are in response to what the firms in the community have indicated are their concerns and needs. Second, it demonstrates that the Task Force has carefully weighed the background information and data analysis, which provides credibility for the recommendations.

**Recommendations** The recommendations should simply be read by the Coordinator or Task Force member following each set of results. The audience can follow along with the Coordinator in the executive summary report of the program which includes the recommendations.

### Modifications

Communities are welcome to modify this suggested format. In one case, a District Specialist from the Ohio State University Cooperative Extension Service gave the introduction to the meeting and some of the data findings. Each Task Force member then presented a recommendation. This was an excellent modification because some of the key players, the Extension Service and the Task Force members, took active roles.

### Whom to Invite

You should invite the BR&E staff, Coordinators, Consultant, Task Force members, sponsoring organizations, organizations giving endorsement for the program, volunteer visitors, firm representatives, local government officials, county commissioners, city councilmen, city managers, chamber executives, CIC representatives, mayors, local Representatives, state Senators, all economic development groups, planning departments, school superintendents, vocational school representatives, university faculty (if applicable), State Unemployment Compensation Agency representatives, Job Training Partnership Act representatives, Private Industry Council members, local Cooperative Extension Service Agent, regional Extension Agent, the director of the Department of Development, managers from the Department of Development offices of Industrial Development, Local Community Services, Financing, International Trade, and State and Local Government, and anyone else who is interested in economic development in your community.



### Ways to Improve Attendance

Certain elements seem to be associated with impressive, well-attended, and meaningful community meetings. We know that some communities will not be able to follow all of our suggestions because they may have fewer resources than others; nonetheless, we strongly recommend the following:

1. Organize and plan the meeting collectively. The Coordinators, Consultant, and Task Force members must decide collectively, as a group the specifics for the community meeting, such as the date, time, place, format, and audience. Be sure to check the dates and times with the BR&E staff before announcing the meeting.
2. Make the meeting social. Have the meeting in a banquet room or hotel. Send out invitations with R.S.V.P.s instead of just letters. Serve hors d'oeuvres and refreshments or a meal. Have an hour before the presentation for mingling and socializing. Although this may seem to be emphasizing the social aspect of the occasion more than the content, it really is not. If you want good attendance and attentive guests, you need to make the meeting more than just a meeting; you need to make it a social event. And it is a social event, in part, to celebrate the completion of the BR&E program.
3. Get media coverage. Newspaper articles, radio spots, and television coverage before the meeting will help increase your attendance because the media coverage gives the event more credibility and importance than it would receive otherwise. Media coverage after the event, however, is probably more likely since there will be more "news" to report.
4. Do not invite a guest speaker who will completely overshadow the purpose of the meeting which is reporting the program's findings. Inviting a public official during an election campaign, for example, focuses the audience's attention on him, not your program and accomplishments.
5. Hold the meeting in conjunction with another organization's meeting. You may want to present the program's results at a Rotary Club meeting, for example. This arrangement guarantees you an audience but it may limit the time you have to present the program.
6. Even though each firm will receive an invitation, have the volunteers invite their firms by phone. This adds a personal touch to the meeting and may increase attendance.
7. Do not present the findings and recommendations prematurely. It usually takes at least two months between the time the Task Force receives its draft copy of the report and writes its recommendations. It takes another six weeks to have the Final Report and Summary printed with the recommendations. During these months, some communities have wanted to simply share the findings and recommendations before the reports are ready. We think this approach only weakens the purpose of the community meeting. (Each guest at the meeting should receive the executive summary so he/she can follow along during the presentation.) If these guests attend a similar presentation but do not receive a report, most of the information they hear at the meeting will not be retained and their enthusiasm for the recommendations will wane. By providing guests with a copy, they hear and read the results of the program; therefore, the message of community development is conveyed more effectively.



Meeting agenda

General information about the meetings. We know that the meetings may have lower turnout than in the past.

1. Meeting agenda  
The meeting will be held at the same place as the last meeting. The agenda will be as follows:

2. Meeting agenda  
The meeting will be held at the same place as the last meeting. The agenda will be as follows:

3. Meeting agenda  
The meeting will be held at the same place as the last meeting. The agenda will be as follows:

4. Meeting agenda  
The meeting will be held at the same place as the last meeting. The agenda will be as follows:

5. Meeting agenda  
The meeting will be held at the same place as the last meeting. The agenda will be as follows:

6. Meeting agenda  
The meeting will be held at the same place as the last meeting. The agenda will be as follows:

7. Meeting agenda  
The meeting will be held at the same place as the last meeting. The agenda will be as follows:

8. Meeting agenda  
The meeting will be held at the same place as the last meeting. The agenda will be as follows:



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY



1023025771

